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# common ground

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## on the money

FICTITIOUS CAPITAL BANK BAILOUTS FRAUD GMO TOXIC CORN ASSETS PONZI SCHEME  
CASINO CAPITALISM DEBT DEFLATION HOUSE OF CARDS FOG OF MONEY DEBT DECEPTION SITE C DAM  
PROTECTION RACKET GLOBAL CRISIS CON GAME 2.0 PRIVATIZING THE COMMONS PARASITIC INTEREST  
BANKSTERS JUSTICE VS. JUST U.S. CONSUMER SLAVERY THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE, NOT THE BS (BANK STORY)

**The bubble and beyond**

Michael Hudson

**Money changers serenade**

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**Divine compensation**

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**COVER** Art by Anthony Freda and Dan Zollinger [www.anthonypreda.com](http://www.anthonypreda.com).  
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Oscar Wilde said, "If you are going to tell people the truth, make them laugh. Otherwise, they will kill you." Anthony Freda wrote, "I am an information warrior. My work is designed to open hearts and minds... Gerald Celente inspires me to create images that expose hypocrites, warmongers and those who seek to destroy our liberty. He is bold yet tempers his message with humour" Michael Hudson's new book *The Bubble and Beyond* illuminates what's really going on with the economy. Reading this edition is a very good investment. — *Joseph Roberts, publisher*





# Money Changer's Serenade

What in the world is going on?



by Gerald Celente

## *Too Big to Fail*

Only when you follow the story from the start, stay abreast of how it develops, carefully parse the language to unspin the spin, get your information from a wide range of sources and analyze the data for what it is – rather than for what you want it to be – can you hope to arrive at an objective conclusion. When this process is followed in observing and analyzing the Spanish banking crisis, it leads us to two conclusions:

1. It is, above all else, a con game. The con artists (heads of states, chiefs of finance and assorted technocrats) will say anything, do anything and promise anything in order to instill “confidence” in the markets and mollify the people.

2. It is crystal clear and undeniable that all these leaders, authorities and experts shooting off their mouths do not have a clue as to how to solve the crisis.

Elections are little more than turf wars between political crime families. But rather than fighting it out on the streets, to give it an air of legitimacy, the battles are waged at the ballot box. Republican, Democrats, Socialist, Bonannos, Gambinos, Lansky's, the methods differed but the motivation is the same: monetary profit and personal power.

And just as the old crime bosses died, were killed or dethroned and their families dissolved, so, too, the political crime syndicate is now under threat.

The time is ripe for new parties and new systems. Will the openings be filled with something new or will the political mob continue to rule? The outcome depends upon one thing: the will and spirit of the individual. Will

people take their destiny into their own hands or continue to kneel before their oppressors; their “leaders,” “law-makers,” “experts” and “authorities?”

It is only through having a clear understanding of the timeline of events that a clear picture of where they will lead is possible. Mainstream coverage, even when done in depth, tends to obscure the big picture by concentrating on the “breaking news” details.

It is important to recognize how, with each passing day, the headline news shifts focus from one crisis to the other. First there was Ireland, then Portugal, then Greece, now Spain. Tomorrow Italy, and the next day the world,

Out of the volumes of press coverage, an impression was created that the experts, authorities, politicians and pundits – even when they disagreed with each other – knew what they were talking about. It was only by following the story closely and referencing an array of global media sources that it became transcendently clear that they were all full of shit and making it up as they went along.

The proof was that not only were the problems not solved, they were exacerbated.

Yet, the central bankers, and grandiosely labeled “monetary policy makers” were allowed to get away with it. Political and financial royalty pontificated in voices of authority from their financial palaces and pulpits, while the prostitutes persisted in kowtowing to them. As for the general public, apart from a tiny percentage of the financially attuned, most didn't know, didn't care, and couldn't tell you the difference between IMF, EU, ECB and ABC.



The real purpose behind the austerity measures was to wring every cent they could out of the public in order to save the banks from the consequences of their bad bets

### **The Shadow knows! The shakedown**

There was no solving the European debt crisis. Despite big promises made by “leaders” attending the G-20 meeting in Mexico, it concluded with no breakthrough. The buzz quickly died down and gave way to a “great deal of anxiety among investors,” according to ECB executive board member Benoit Coeuré. “Political choices have to be made,” he explained, “and it's not surprising that markets are in disarray because they don't know the answers.”

Of course it was “not surprising.” The markets didn't know the answers because the G-20 politicians didn't have the answers. These weren't brilliant minds with proven track records. They were the exact opposite. They were no more than career politicians whose careers were littered with policy failures. “More fundamentally,” Coeuré continued, “we are now in the third year of the European crisis and coming to a point *continued p.38...*”



# The Bubble and Beyond

Fictitious capital, debt deflation and the global crisis

This summary of my economic theory traces how industrial capitalism has turned into finance capitalism. The finance, insurance and real estate (FIRE) sector has emerged to create “balance sheet wealth” not by new tangible investment and employment, but financially in the form of debt leveraging and rent-extraction. This rentier overhead is overpowering the economy’s ability to produce a large enough surplus to carry its debts. As in a radioactive decay process, we are passing through a short-lived and unstable phase of “casino capitalism,” which now threatens to settle into leaden austerity and debt deflation.

This situation confronts society with a choice either to write down debts to a level that can be paid (or indeed, to write them off altogether with a clean slate) or to permit creditors to foreclose, concentrating property in their own hands (including whatever assets are in the public domain to be privatized) and imposing a combination of financial and fiscal austerity on the population. This scenario will produce a shrinking debt-ridden and tax-ridden economy.

The latter is the path the Western nations are pursuing today. It is the opposite path that classical economists advocated and which Progressive Era writers expected to

occur, given the inherent optimism of focusing on technological potential rather than on the political stratagems of the vested rentier interests fighting back against the classical idea of free markets and economic reforms to free industrial capitalism from the surviving carry-overs



The financial sector seeks to justify today’s deepening indebtedness on the ground that it “creates wealth” by debt leveraging.

of medieval and even ancient privileges and essentially corrosive, anti-social behaviour.

Today’s post-industrial strategy of “wealth creation” is to use debt leveraging to bid up asset prices. From corporate raiders to arbitrageurs and computerized trading programs, this “casino capitalist” strategy works as long as asset prices rise at a faster rate than the interest that has to be paid. But it contains the seeds of its

own destruction, because it builds up financial claims on the assets pledged as collateral – without creating new means of production. Instead of steering credit into tangible capital formation, banks find it easier to make money by lending to real estate and monopolies (and to other financial institutions). Their plan is to capitalize land rent, natural resource rent and monopoly privileges into loans, stocks and bonds.

This leads the banks to act as lobbyist for their rentier clients, to free them from taxes so that they will have more available to pay interest. The resulting tax shift onto labour and industry adds a fiscal burden to the debt overhead.

This is not a natural and even inevitable form of evolution. It is a detour from the kind of economy and indeed free market that classical writers sought to create. With roots in the 13th-century Schoolmen discussing Just Price, the labour theory of value was refined as a tool to isolate economic rent as that element of price that had no counterpart in actual or necessary costs of production. Banking charges, monopoly rent and land rent were the three types of economic rent analyzed in this long classical tradition. These rentier charges were seen as unnecessary and exploitative special privileges carried over from the military conquests that shaped medieval



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Europe. A free market was defined as one free of such overhead charges.

This classical view of free markets as being free of an unearned “free lunch” was embodied in the Progressive Era’s financial and tax reforms. But the rentiers have fought back. The financial sector seeks to justify today’s deepening indebtedness on the ground that it “creates wealth” by debt leveraging. Yet the banks’ product is a debt overhead, leaving debt deflation in its wake as debtors try to pay debts that can’t be paid without drastically reducing consumption and investment. A shrinking economy falls further into arrears in a debt spiral.

The question today is whether a new wave of reform will arise to restore and indeed complete the vision of classical political economy that seemed to be shaping evolution a century ago on the eve of World War I, or whether the epoch of industrial capitalism will be rolled back toward a neofeudal reaction defending rentier interests against reform. What is up for grabs is how society will resolve the legacy of debts that can’t be paid. Will it let the financial sector foreclose, and even force governments to privatize the public domain under distress conditions? Or will debts be written down to what can be paid without polarizing wealth and income, dismantling government, and turning tax policy over to financial lobbyists pretending to be objective technocrats?

To provide a perspective on the financial sector’s rise to dominance over the industrial economy, *The Bubble and Beyond* reviews how classical economists developed the tools to measure how finance now plays role that landlords did in Physiocratic and Ricardian theory: as beneficiaries of feudal privileges that oblige society to pay them for access to credit as well as land. As land ownership has been democratized, new buyers obtain credit to purchase homes and office buildings by pledging the rental income to bankers. About 80 percent of bank loans in the United States, Britain and other English-speaking countries are real estate mortgages, making land the major bank collateral. The result is that mortgage bankers receive the rents formerly taken by a hereditary aristocracy in post-feudal Europe and the colonies it conquered.

Whatever the tax collector relinquishes is available for this end. This has led the financial sector to subsidize popular opposition to taxing property – reversing the ideology of free markets held by the classical economic reformers. And with the financialization of real estate providing the post-industrial model, corporate raiders since the 1980s have adopted the speculator’s motto, “Rent is for paying interest,” using corporate cash flow to make a deal with their backers to obtain loans to take over companies already in place – and bleed them.

This phenomenon is called financialization, and my book describes how it has transformed the economics of real estate, industry and pension fund saving into a Bubble Economy based on debt-leveraged asset-price inflation – leaving debt deflation in its wake. The banker’s business plan, after all, is to turn as much of the economic surplus as possible into a flow of interest payments. But this must be self-defeating. Paying debt service diverts revenue away from being spent on consumption and tangible capital investment. This causes debt deflation and imposes financial austerity. Capital and infrastructure are

bled to squeeze out the revenue to pay bankers and other creditors, depleting the economy’s reproductive powers.

What is unique to the post-1980 Bubble Economy is the tactic by which austerity has been averted, by new credit creation to inflate asset prices in what is rightly termed a Ponzi scheme. (The appendix at the end of this volume defines the terms and concepts by which I describe this process.) Instead of interest rates rising to reflect the increasing risks of the debt-ridden economy, banks kept the financialization process going by easing credit terms: lowering interest rates and the amortization rate (culminating in “interest only loans), and also lowering down payments (for zero down payment loans) and credit standards (appropriately called “liars’ loans”).



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The direct effect of collateral-based lending is to bid up prices for the real estate, stocks and bonds pledged as collateral for larger and larger loans. An asset is worth whatever a bank will lend against it, and easier credit terms serve to preserve the market price of assets pledged for debt. This is the case even as the economy diverts more of its income – and transfers more of its capital and future income – to the financial sector, which concentrates wealth in its own hands.

Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan encouraged mortgage borrowers to think of themselves as getting richer as the market price of their homes rose in the early 2000s. But the “wealth creation” was debt-leveraged, and easy credit obliged new buyers to take on a lifetime of debt to afford housing. After 2008 their mortgages had to be paid even as a quarter of U.S. residential real estate fell into negative equity when market prices plunged below the level of the mortgages attached to it.

A similar phenomenon has occurred as education has been financialized. Students must take on decades of student-loan obligations and pay them regardless of whether the education enables them to get jobs in an economy shrinking from debt deflation. The magnitude of these loans now exceeds \$1 trillion – larger even than credit-card debt. Instead of being treated as a public utility to prepare the population for gainful work, the educational system has been turned into an opportunity for banks to profiteer from a debt market guaranteed by the government.

The economy’s circular flow becomes a vicious circle as paying debt service leads to smaller market demand for goods. Investment and employment are cut back, government budgets move into deficit, forcing cutbacks in revenue sharing with localities and subsidies for education. Schools raise their tuition levels, obliging students and families to take on more debt, creating yet more debt deflation.

Other public infrastructure is sold off to pay down debts, and the buyers raise access prices and tolls on roads and other privatized transportation – and so on throughout the economy. Debts mount up increasingly as a result of arrears in making payments, losing all relationship with the realistic ability to pay.

What has gone relatively unremarked by economists is how financialization of the economy has transformed the idea of saving. In times past, saving was non-spending on goods and services – in the form of liquid assets. Typically on a national scale, between one-sixth and one-fifth of income would be saved – and invested in capital on the other side of the balance sheet. But since the 1980s, as banks loosened lending standards on real estate and made and the financial sector in general turned increasingly to financing corporate raiders, mergers and acquisitions, the way to create future wealth was not to save, but was to go into debt. The aim was capital gains more than current income. Indeed, after 2001 many families “made more” on the rising market price of their homes than they made in salary (not to speak of being able to save out of their salary).

Under financialization, the strategy was to seek capital gains, riding the wave of asset-price inflation being fuelled by Alan Greenspan at the Federal Reserve Board. Investment performance was measured in terms of “total returns,” defined as income yield plus capital gains. And the way to maximize these gains was to borrow at a relatively low interest rate, to buy assets whose price was rising at a higher rate. For the first time in recorded history, large numbers of people went into debt not out of need, not involuntarily and as a result of running arrears as a result of inability to pay, but voluntarily, believing that debt leveraging was the quickest and easiest way to get rich!

The national income accounts were not designed to trace this process. Using debt leveraging to obtain capital gains meant that bank loans found their counterpart in debt on the other side of the balance sheet, not new tangible investment. The result was a wash. So the nominal savings rate declined – to zero by 2008. Yet people thought of themselves as saving, as long as their net worth was rising. That is supposed *continued p.25...*



# Eating for beauty



*The subtle energy of your food becomes your mind. – The Upanishads*

“You are what you eat” is a cosmic law. That phrase is like a zip file that was attached to our spirit when we were emailed to the planet. It seems strange that I have never met anyone who did not know the phrase “you are what you eat.” From this phrase, much can be derived.

At the most basic level, you remake yourself moment-by-moment and meal-to-meal. The food you eat becomes part of who you are. Thus, lasting beauty stems from a commitment to eating beautifying foods.

There are two ways to approach a more beautifying diet: Adding healthy foods, pure water and beautifying nutrients. Leaving out unhealthy, damaging foods and tap water.

Not sure what to leave out? The foods that disfavour beauty include processed-chemicalized foods, refined sugar, processed-cooked starches, cooked rancid oils and fried foods. Sweets, refined breads and sodas are damaging to the teeth and skin and stimulate weight gain. Starchy hybridized cooked carbs (including most common breads and grain products, as well as, potatoes) make the skin dry and pasty. “White” foods such as white bread, white rice, refined pasta, rice cakes, potato chips, French fries, soda pop and energy drinks are low in minerals and high in sugar. These are exactly the things we need to avoid. Foods like these deplete the body of minerals, create acidity and can lead to fungus, yeast and mold overgrowth and immune system susceptibility in the body.

Sugar is damaging to the skin because it attaches to collagen molecules, causing stiffness and inflexibility.

This leads to accelerated skin damage and wrinkle formation. In addition, when simple sugar molecules such as fructose or glucose are in the bloodstream without the moderation of an enzyme, they can become attached to proteins or lipids (fats). This process is called glycation. Glycation creates the formation of rogue molecules called advanced glycation end-products (AGEs). If a person has a high amount of sugar in their diet, they will have a high amount of AGEs in their bloodstream – and these inflammatory compounds literally prematurely age us.

Cooked and rancid oils and fats are also particularly destructive because these compounds do not dissolve in water. Since we are primarily a water-based life form, it makes metabolism of cooked and rancid oils difficult at best. Cooked and rancid oils may make it into fatty organs and tissues where they are inflammatory in nature, burden these organs and inevitably create detrimental responses in the skin’s complexion, leading to acne, wrinkles and premature aging.

Raw fats and oils are important though. Every cell in your body requires some fats and oils. When you eat healthy fats – like pure omega 3 fatty acids, olive oil, oily seeds, and avocados – your cell membranes become flexible and the cells can absorb nutrients well and respond properly to hormones. But when you eat unhealthy fats, they end up being deposited in parts of your cell membranes that take the place of good fats like a toxic impostor. These cells can become stiff and inflexible, causing both health and beauty problems. Inflexible cell membranes make it difficult for nutrients to be transported into the cells. Circulation can become sluggish, which contributes to dry, flaky skin and acne. Stiff cell membranes make your cells less responsive to important hormonal messages. All this adds up to bad news for your skin and longevity.

Sometimes skin conditions (like eczema and psoriasis) can be partly caused by nutritional deficiencies (toxic foods are also causative factors in these skin conditions). Once the deficiency is rectified and the body has what it needs as building blocks, the body can heal itself and the skin will return back to normal. Vitamins and oils that are important for good skin are destroyed by heat. These include: vitamins A, C, D, E, K and omega 3 fatty acids as well as raw saturated fats (especially coconut oil). On the other hand, nutrient-rich raw food is ideal for placing a sparkle in the eyes, lustre in the hair, radiance in the skin and a pleasant odour to the body.

Let’s face it; approaching your diet from a place of denial and discipline does not work in the long run. The easiest way to make changes is to begin by adding, not subtracting. By adding nutrient-rich foods, superfoods and superherbs, you allow your body to shift automatically at its own pace so that, eventually, processed foods will lose their appeal.

The foods we add should be as nutrient-rich and as densely mineralized as possible. Eating organic foods, superfoods and superherbs grown in mineralized soils is ideal. Over time, the goal is that every food you put in your mouth is nutrient-dense. This will go a long way

towards building healthy tissues throughout the body that will have long-term implications, not only for beauty, but for longevity as well.

Another key thing to include in everyone’s diet is good, hydrating, clean, structured water. I recommend finding a natural spring for fresh, wild spring water. Water flushes toxins, transports nutrients, keeps cells hydrated and plump and prevents dry skin. Chemicals and pollution abound in our world. No source of tap water anywhere in the world (except in Iceland) is safe to drink. You have to either get a filter or your body will become a filter.

Raw food contains a lot of hydration in the form of juice. Juice makes your tissues plump and youthful. If you desire beauty, your tissues should have a juicy, hydrated quality about them. You can also get hydrating benefits from juicing fruits and vegetables and young coconut water.



**Over time, the goal is that every food you put in your mouth is nutrient-dense. This will go a long way towards building healthy tissues.**

Here are some important foods and nutrients to include for beautiful skin and hair:

Antioxidants to slow the oxidation of cells by free radicals (reactive oxygen). Good concentrations of antioxidants are found in berries, citrus, cacao, leafy greens and many superfoods, as well as raw fats and oils.

Enzymes to promote absorption and assimilation of nutrients. Enzymes are naturally present in raw foods and low-temperature dehydrated foods. Enzyme supplements are also recommended to improve metabolism, speed healing and for youthening.

Omega 3s are important essential fatty acids lacking in most people. Omega 3s are found in hemp seeds, flax seeds, chia seeds, walnuts, evening primrose oil, algae oil, fish oil and Krill oil. They protect cell membranes and provide what the body needs for better skin hydration. They decrease red splotches in the skin and help smooth rough skin.

Saturated Fat (Coconut Oil and Raw Butter) is the dominant oil in your body and makes up over 60% of the oils in your skin. Raw saturated fats are important antioxidants that also support the nervous system.

Vitamins A and K protect against skin cancer and help the body produce sebum – an oil that serves as a natural conditioner. Good sources of both these vitamins include dark green vegetables such as: kale, broccoli, chard, collards and beet greens.

Vitamin C youthens, decreases wrinkles and plays a role in synthesis of collagen, a protein responsible for elasticity. Vitamin C is easily found *continued p.17...*



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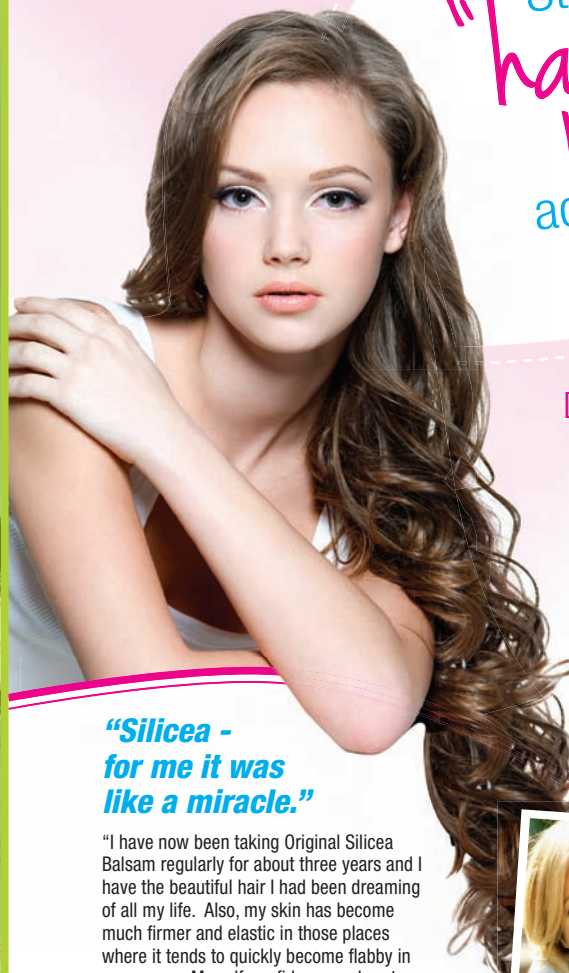


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\*This clinical study was published in Archives of Dermatological Research (2007) 299 : 499-505





## Briefing Notes on Prescription Drugs

## Treating-to-Target

## Aggressive approach may lead to bigger problems

For most people, taking drugs for high blood pressure seems like the right thing to do, but is it? That's the question I'm asking as I look ever more closely at what the research says about the wisdom of feeding pharmaceuticals to otherwise healthy people who have nothing other than a "high" blood pressure reading.

Let's start with a parable of how things typically unroll.

Seventy-eight-year-old Mary McGillicutty is told she's got "high" blood pressure. The blood pressure cuff reads 155 over 95 (millimetres of mercury, abbreviated as mmHG). The top number is the pressure on her artery walls when her heart contracts and the lower number is the pressure when her heart relaxes. Mary's doctor wants to see lower numbers and he convinces her of the need to do so.

Dangerously high blood pressure is a risk factor for heart attacks and strokes. Lowering that pressure, through exercise, diet modification and drugs, can reduce the risk. Right now, "normal" blood pressure is defined as being at or below 120 over 80. You might be labelled a "prehypertensive" if your blood pressure is between 120 to 139 over 80 to 89. The classic "stage 1 hypertension" is when it is between 140 to 159 over 90 to 99.

Most people don't know that the level considered "high" has changed over the years. One physician told me that, 10 years ago, he wouldn't do anything with a patient whose pressures were 160 over 100 but now, he says, "You'd almost feel like you were committing malpractice if you didn't give your patient a drug."

Our doctors are 'trained' to get that blood pressure down 'to target' – as close to normal as possible – and the concept of "treating to target" is reinforced through blood pressure guidelines, cardiologists who deliver medical education to doctors and pharmaceutical sales people schmoozing our doctors' offices with new drug samples. Some have said "treating to target" as a concept is a creation of the pharmaceutical industry, which reinforces that message because it's a great way to get doctors to prescribe drugs and patients to swallow them.

But back to Mary. No matter what her doctor does, he can't seem to make her numbers much lower. He tries one drug, a diuretic, and the blood pressure drops only a little; then he tries another and after a few weeks of frustration, he adds a third.

Mary's numbers are slowly dropping but another thing is happening: she's not feeling so well.

A few days after the third anti-hypertensive drug is added to her regime, Mrs. McGillicutty sits up in bed one morning, feeling all light-headed and dizzy. She tries to stand and falls. An ambulance is called and by that evening Mary is in surgery for a broken hip. Her life is never the same. High blood pressure now seems trivial compared to the life-altering effects of a hip fracture. She never lives in her own home again.

I only have one word for this all too-common situation: "Harrumph."

Was this mess started with the need, nay, the very strong push to get her blood pressures to go as low as possible? Why do we push the "treat to target" paradigm on people and in so doing risk the effects of another kind of illness, "hypotension," (low blood pressure)?

Peter Conrad, author of the 2007 book, *The Medicalization of Society*, points a finger at the American Society of Hypertension, claiming its pharmaceutical-funded campaigns were behind efforts to "redefine hypertension to turn it into a broader syndrome." The rationale was like this: With blood pressure defined as being at or over 140/90, about 65 million Americans would fit that category. Lower that to 120/80 and guess what? Cue the cash-register sounds as you've increased the potential antihypertensive drug market in the US by nearly 30 million people, overnight. And that's exactly what they did.

If you were in a business that depended on selling drugs and visits to the doctor, you couldn't dream up anything more successful than routine blood pressure moni-

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toring and treatment. In fact, getting our blood pressure checked is the single most common reason for visiting the physician. Why is that? Because regardless of your definition, a lot of us have hypertension. The US Centres for Disease Control conducted a large population survey in 2010 and found that “25% of a random sample of US adults had been told on two or more visits that they had hypertension.”

Luckily for us, a new research study published in mid-August by the Cochrane Collaboration ([www.cochrane.org](http://www.cochrane.org)) has found something that should revolutionize how we treat blood pressure. The Cochrane Collaboration is a highly trusted source of drug information as it is independent of funding from the pharmaceutical industry and relies on ‘gold-standard’ methods for reviewing and synthesizing only the best evidence.

Also luckily for us, the Cochrane Collaboration’s Hypertension Review Group is headquartered right here in Vancouver, with UBC’s Therapeutics Initiative. The coordinating editor of this international team of researchers, who focus their research on blood pressure treatments, is Dr. Jim Wright. Over the last few years, his group has produced many major reviews of blood pressure drugs and found that using drugs to lower blood pressure can reduce deaths and illness in people over 60 years of age and that the cheapest and oldest treatments (thiazide diuretics) are the safest and most effective. Very importantly and often overlooked is the fact the main benefits of altering blood pressures with drugs are based mostly on patients who had elevated blood pressure in the moderate to severe range (greater than 160/100 mmHg). But what if it were lower?

If you were in a business that depended on  
selling drugs and visits to the doctor, you couldn’t  
dream up anything more successful than routine  
blood pressure monitoring and treatment.

This new review answered that vitally important question: Does drug treatment versus no treatment ‘work’ for those people who have no established heart disease and only mild hypertension (defined as 140-159 over 90-99 mmHg)? What we mean by ‘work’ is this: Did the drugs produce any statistically significant differences in the numbers of people who died, had strokes, heart attacks or total cardiovascular events?

Drumroll please... No, they didn’t.

Looking at trials totalling nearly 9,000 patients treated for more than four to five years, this review found no evidence that these mild hypertensive patients benefit from drug therapy. Further, about one in 11 patients treated with drugs experienced an adverse effect that was bad enough to make them stop the drug. Dr. Wright concludes his review by calling for better research on who should or should not be treated for high blood pressure.

Fair enough.

But what about the millions of people like Mrs. McGillicutty who are healthy and well and yet their blood pressures have become a demon that physicians feel they must exorcize at all costs? What about people’s lives being made worse from efforts to lower blood pressures ‘to target’? Almost everyone will have higher blood pressure as they get old, but does that mean we need to automatically throw drugs at it?

Mary McGillicutty is not a victim of medical malpractice, but rather of cultural malpractice. Pharma largesse is behind the push for aggressive measuring and drug treatment, almost as if they were working under the medical equivalent of cycling great Lance Armstrong’s mantra “Go hard or go home.” Aggressive medical intervention to get to lower and lower blood pressure is a cultural phenomenon and as author Lynn Payer wrote in her book *Medicine and Culture*, “Even as doctors regard themselves as servants of science, they are often prisoners of custom.”

Thankfully, the truth might set us free and independent research, such as that provided by the Cochrane Collaboration, may end up being a “Get out of jail free” card. ☑

**Alan Cassels** is a pharmaceutical policy researcher at the University of Victoria and author of *Seeking Sickness*. His next book will be about the history of the Cochrane Collaboration. Follow him on Twitter @AKECassels or visit [www.alancassels.com](http://www.alancassels.com)

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## Good Eats

## La Dolce Vita



**D**riving through the mountains, I could see the heat shimmering off the hot rocks, playing tricks on my eyes as mirage pools appeared in the distance only to disappear as I got closer. Free of the city, I was enjoying a spirited ride along narrow mountain roads and it was then I noticed it, faint at first and ephemeral. I found myself searching for another wisp carried on the warm mountain air as my senses were infused with memories of being in the vegetable garden with my mother. There it was again, oregano. Yes, definitely oregano. My mind flashed back to making fresh tomato sauce from beautiful red Roma tomatoes, olive oil and roasted garlic, tossed with oregano from the garden at the height of summer.

As I drove into the valley, I could see a beautiful farm ahead with huge fields full of oregano, basil, coriander, tomatoes, eggplant, beans and zucchini. "Organic fresh eggs ahead," the hand-painted sign noted. Slowing down to a near walking pace, I saw the farm gate and pulled the car into the gravel driveway where I was welcomed by two beautiful English Setters. These dogs were so friendly, the cat didn't stir a whisker as she lay basking in the sun, while hens pecked their way away along the edge of the produce barn



where tables overflowed with everything one might wish for.

Seeing all that beautiful, farm fresh produce, I couldn't help but conjure up dishes in my head and I imagined making pickles from the long green beans and bulbs of garlic. It truly was a cornucopia of delights. When I heard feet crunching on the gravel behind me, I

turned to see the farmer's wife walking towards me smiling, carrying a tray of freshly baked tomato tarts. As my mouth watered, she asked if I would like one while I walked around. I didn't need to be asked twice and I graciously accepted a tart, admiring the symmetry of the tomato slices. Still very warm, my first bite was like heaven and I wondered why we couldn't find this everywhere.

It was like a dream, everything organically grown right here, on the farm, without chemicals. It was food I could trust, food I didn't need to be wary of unlike from the big markets where the GMO Frankenfoods are sold.

I felt a sense of peace as I wandered up and down the tables filling my reusable shopping bags with produce. As I paid my bill, we talked and she told me about a friend who had just died from pesticide poisoning at a farm a few miles away. She asked if I was heading in that direction and if I might take a box of produce with me to drop off. "Of course," I answered without a second's hesitation. As she pushed the address into my hand, her eyes brimmed with tears and she recounted a grim tale.


She shared the tragic story of how chemical companies had come through

the valley 15 or so years ago, spinning yarns of how their new products would bring miracles. Her husband had declined, believing in the old ways, but many others had accepted the free seed and signed long-term contracts as their friends had done, believing all would be wonderful.

And now today, many of their friends have passed on from cancer, renal failure and worse. The social fabric of their once thriving community has been ripped apart by the poisons and toxic seeds these companies provided, companies that lied with impunity. The new products had brought nothing but death, despair and ruin. These same companies then moved in like vultures, feeding on the scraps. They bought up the farms from the bereaved families for next to nothing, their lawyers claiming vast amounts of monies owed. Com-

**We have to do everything  
in our power to fight back  
against Frankenfoods,  
GMOs and agribusiness.**

plaining to the government did nothing, as the officials grew fat from bribes given by the lobbyists.

After I said my goodbyes and pointed my car in the direction of their friend's farm, I felt a deep sadness. We are stewards of our own sphere of influence; we have to do everything in our power to fight back against Frankenfoods, GMOs and agribusiness. We have to hold our government officials liable. We must go back to basics and rethink everything we are eating. We have to sound the bell before it's too late. 

To advertise your restaurant, food product or service in our Good Eats section, please contact food writer Chef **Alastair Gregor** at [alastair@commonground.ca](mailto:alastair@commonground.ca). Alastair's lifelong passion for food was inherited from his grandmother. He is an Honours graduate of the Culinary Institute of Vancouver Island at VIU and has been cooking since he was old enough to see over the top of the stove.

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# Feeding teens

**T**he teen years can be a period of challenge, a little like the terrible twos, except now your kid is several inches taller than you. Mom and dad may find that a formerly compliant child has become a stranger. Nutrition-related issues either become an arena for conflict or shared learning for everyone.

Some teens become vegetarian or vegan, independent of their family's way of eating. Non-vegetarian parents can often be supportive *if* the youngster eats a nutritionally adequate diet. It helps even more if the teen gets into the kitchen and prepares foods to complement the baked potatoes, salads, steamed broccoli, grain products and fruit the rest of the family eats. Typical food items required are the protein-rich beans, peas, lentils and veggie "meats." Stock up on canned vegetarian chili, baked beans, black bean soup, lentil or pea soup and put Gardin's tasty products in the refrigerator or freezer. It can be both economical and rewarding for a youngster and parent to get together once a week, put on some music and prepare a pot of bean soup to store in the freezer in individual portions. This can provide a teen with food preparation skills that will empower them when they are out in the world.

The reverse situation is also common. A teen in a vegetarian family may explore being a part-time meat eater and parents may need to support the youngster's choice when he or she is out with friends.

For those wondering how to fill veggie-style lunch bags, these should include protein-rich foods and whole grains for continued energy through the afternoon. It may seem that if we've given up meat and cheese, there's not much else to fill a sandwich with. Fortunately, there are plenty of easy fillings, including slices of flavoured tofu from the supermarket, hummus (either home-made or commercially-prepared in a variety of flavours), nut and seed butters and veggie "meats" such as Yves Meatless ham, pepperoni, salami or turkey. These can be put in a fresh roll or baguette or between slices of whole grain bread (try rye or sourdough), stuffed in a pita pocket, and rolled in a tortilla. For spreads, use a tasty mustard, guacamole, olive tapenade or eggless mayo. Add sliced avocado, cucumber, green, red, or yellow pepper, onion (red or green), sprouts (alfalfa or sunflower), tomato or shredded carrots. Gluten-free wraps include rice cakes, corn cakes and rice paper wraps. Another welcome choice is the nori roll.

Two main questions teens ask about dinner are: "Does it taste good?" and "Is it ready?" In families with a variety of dietary choices represented, favourite plant-based meals are often international in flavour, including falafels, tacos with refried beans, veggie burgers with all the fixings and pasta with marinara sauce. 

**Vesanto Melina** is a BC dietitian and author of books such as **Raising Vegetarian Children**. Her website is [www.nutrispeak.com](http://www.nutrispeak.com)

## Black Bean Chipotle Dip

*Makes 2 cups*

This dip or spread is a great source of protein, trace minerals and folate. (From *Cooking Vegetarian* by J. Forest and V. Melina, Wiley Canada.)

2 cups cooked or canned black beans	1 clove garlic, chopped
1/4 cup tahini	1/2 tsp. each of cumin and oregano
1/4 cup lime juice	1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 cup water	2 Tbs. chopped cilantro or parsley
1 tsp. chipotle pepper, minced	1 Tbs. extra virgin olive oil

Combine the beans, tahini, lime juice, water, chipotle, garlic, cumin, oregano and salt in the bowl of a food processor and puree until smooth. Add cilantro, olive oil and blend for 5 seconds. Season to taste.

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# GM corn proves deadly for lab rats

The first-ever GM food safety study to test over the entire life span of laboratory rats (two years) was published last month and found serious health impacts from eating Monsanto's genetically engineered (also called genetically modified or GM) corn NK603, which was approved in Canada in 2001. The peer-reviewed study also tested the impacts of consuming residues of Monsanto's herbicide Roundup, the widest selling herbicide in the world.

"Health Canada has approved this GM corn and all other GM foods based on corporate tests that were too short to observe the severe health impacts that this study found," said Lucy Sharratt of the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, "Health Canada has never looked past the 90 days of Monsanto's studies. Canadians have been eating this particular GM corn since 2001."

The study, published in the scientific journal *Food and Chemical Toxicology*, is the first animal feeding trial conducted over the lifetime of rats (700 days). Health Canada evaluates the safety of GM foods based on industry studies, the longest of which have been 90-day animal feeding trials. The study tested three different diets: GM corn, GM corn with herbicide residue and without.

Monsanto's GM corn NX603 is herbicide tolerant meaning it is genetically engineered to withstand sprayings of Monsanto's herbicide Roundup. Health Canada approved it in 2001. French media are reporting that the GM corn samples used in the study were secured from a Canadian university.

The new study observed that rats fed the GM corn, or Roundup, developed tumours faster and died earlier than rats fed non-GM corn. Furthermore, the first tumour was observed after 120 days, with the majority detected after 18 months.


The study shows GM corn can cause severe negative health effects in laboratory rats including mammary tumours and kidney and liver damage, leading to premature death:

- Fed GM corn or Roundup, up to 50% of males and 70% of females died prematurely, compared with only 30% and 20% in the control group.
- Females developed fatal mammary tumours and pituitary disorders. Males suffered liver damage and developed kidney and skin tumours and problems with their digestive system.
- Rats fed GM corn or Roundup developed two to three times more tumours.
- By the 24th month, 50% to 80% of the females had developed large tumours compared to 30% in the control group.

According to Sharratt, "Health Canada must re-evaluate the safety of all GM foods based on these results and halt new approvals until we have long-term testing and transparent regulation. Are Canadians expected to continue eating GM corn? The federal government needs to redesign the entire system that approves GM foods because our regulations are not designed to look for the types of problems these scientists have found.

"The safety of GM foods cannot be assumed, it needs to be tested. We cannot rely on science from companies to prove safety. We need to turn to the precautionary principle to keep Canadians safe and this means keeping GM foods off the shelves."

The government of France is already calling for action in the wake of the study. The relevant ministers in France say the research confirms that European Union regulations on GM foods are insufficient in regards to the study of toxicological effects.

The study was conducted by a team led by molecular biologist and endocrinologist professor Gilles-Eric Seralini of the University of Caen in France and was supported by the independent research organization CRIIGEN, the Committee of Research and Independent Information on Genetic Engineering. 

From Canadian Biotechnology Action Network ([www.cban.ca](http://www.cban.ca))

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On the Garden Path Carolyn Herriot

ORGANICS



## Season of change

*If you wanna make the world a better place, take a look at yourself and then make the change. – Michael Jackson, Man in the Mirror.*

Each morning, I start my day perched on a wooden milk stool at the door of my greenhouse. From this perspective, I survey the food garden and take time to contemplate what I see. Birds and insects are always in the viewscape, as well as a riotous colour of plants and rustling leaves. At the same time, I often reflect on the state of the world and what I feel.

Many changes are coming because people are driving them and I am glad about this because it shows what I consider to be true democracy at work. I feel reassured people are finding their voice and standing up to the destructive practices of money hungry corporations and swindling tax evaders. But I also feel rising anxiety and tension as political, ecological and climate instability become more evident. The government is in denial about climate change and there is a subsequent scarcity of solutions to the potential havoc ahead so I continue to ask myself, "What can I do to alleviate this situation?"

**Very few of us understand the importance of the 51 essential nutrients we need in our diet every day.**

For me, the answer is to be the change I want to see so a few years ago, I planted a garden full of food, fruit trees and berry bushes – we raise chickens too – so I could better safeguard my future. What joy to live in a 'Garden of Eating'! In the process of creating my 'edible masterpiece,' I learned so much I wanted to share it with others. Making sure my neighbour is fed is my definition of food security, as we are all in this together. So I share my knowledge by writing books and articles on how to garden organically, how to grow food year-round and save seeds and just recently, how to connect the garden to the kitchen in *The Zero-Mile Diet Cookbook*. Writing this book has made me more aware of nutrition and the vital role food plays in determining our well-being.

It amazes me we have figured out how to send probes to Mars, but still haven't figured out how to feed ourselves on planet Earth. Perhaps it's because in school, we aren't teaching our children about nutrition and our doctors aren't learning about it either. Unless we seek out the knowledge ourselves, very few of us understand the importance of the 51 essential nutrients we need in our diet every day to maintain the healthy functioning of our body. The human body is a finely tuned and complex organism that needs to be properly maintained and serviced, just as we do for cars, but they actually come with a manual on how they work and how to look after them.

It's time for change. Neighbourhoods and community associations are now gathering to address how to feed themselves in the face of disruption to the global food supply. By reaching out to neighbours and growing more food together, people become part of a forward thinking collective movement. The best part is that, as we work together to sow the seeds of greater food security, we also sow the seeds of community. Seeing this happen makes me feel more hopeful for the future when I look out at my garden because it's clear these changes make the world a better place to live. 🌱

Carolyn Herriot is author of *The Zero-Mile Diet, a Year-round Guide to Growing Organic Food* and *The Zero-Mile Diet Cookbook: Seasonal Recipes for Delicious Homegrown Food* (Harbour Publishing, fall 2012). <http://earthfuture.com/gardenpath/>




... *Eating for Beauty* from p.8

in most fruits and vegetables, especially papaya, kiwis, strawberries, tomatoes, red bell pepper, oranges and lemons and limes. Botanical, concentrated powdered vitamin C sources such as camu camu, acerola, amla and rosehips are also recommended.

Vitamin E protects cells against free radicals and is commonly found in almonds, avocados, hazelnuts, sunflower seeds, olives, olive oil and lettuce. Vitamin E supplements are recommended; one should consume both tocopherol and tocotrienol forms of vitamin E.

Zinc helps the immune system and digestion, improves stress levels, supports healthy hair and helps heal eczema, acne and wounds. Good sources of zinc include poppy seeds, pumpkin seeds, cashews, pecans, almonds and nearly all foods that are naturally black in colour.

Although topical creams and oils can help your skin and hair look more radiant, the best way to build beauty is to glow from within. Invest in delicious foods, superfoods and superherbs. Remember, the foundation of beauty is within. 



**David "Avocado" Wolfe** has been an advocate of raw food for 20 years. He is considered by his peers to be one of the world's leading authorities in nutrition. He is a bestselling author and world authority on

raw foods and superfoods. He is the founder and the leading contributor to the Internet's only peak performance and nutrition online magazine: [www.TheBestDayEver.com](http://www.TheBestDayEver.com) See David Wolfe in Vancouver at the Seed Event, October 13, PNE Forum. [www.seedevent.org](http://www.seedevent.org)

## Beauty breakfast

### Blend together:

2 cups unsweetened almond milk  
1 cup ice  
1 handful of fresh or frozen blueberries  
1 handful of fresh or frozen raspberries  
2 tbs. goji berries  
1 tbs. hempseed oil or  
pumpkin seed oil (Styrian)  
1 tbs. spirulina powder  
1 tsp. acai powder  
½ tsp. camu camu  
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# Health Canada bans citronella

For those of you relieved to have found natural products containing citronella that actually work to repel bugs – so you could avoid using Deet – you had better stock up. These products are in the process of being axed by Health Canada. Better yet, do something about it. Call your MP or protest directly to Health Canada or to the Health Minister.

The reason these safe citronella products are being ordered off the market – even as Deet has caused so many side effects and is still widely available – involves establishment manipulation of science. You see, citronella contains a substance called methyleugenol. When methyleugenol *on its own* was administered *internally* to mice – via a stomach tube – tumours arose at multiple sites. <http://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/ntp/roc/twelfth/profiles/Methyleugenol.pdf> Oral administration and intraperitoneal injections in rats produced similar results. The conclusion that was reached and publicized right off the top is that methyleugenol is “Reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen” so citronella is being pulled based on “reasonable anticipation.” But there are problems with Health Canada’s rationale. Humans applying citronella oil to



their skin is obviously *not* the equivalent of forcing oral ingestion of one of its isolated constituents into the stomachs of mice/rats or injecting it into their body cavities, (i.e. methyleugenol). In addition to the obvious reasons, when it comes to natural substances, the whole simply doesn’t equal the sum of the parts.

To illustrate this, consider a presentation given by Bruce Ames, PhD., at the Seventh International Sym-

posium on Functional Medicine. Bruce Ames is the scientist who came up with the Ames Test for carcinogenicity. Using this test, you can take a compound and assess its potential to cause gene mutations and based on the outcome, you can determine how likely it is to cause cancer, or not. According to Dr. Ames, you have to be careful about drawing conclusions from this and he used fruits and vegetables to make this point. He noted that, if you take any fruit or vegetable and break it down into its constituent compounds and test them individually, invariably about half of them will cause cancer (i.e. test positive), yet fruits and vegetables themselves don’t cause cancer. They are, in fact, protective against cancer. Thus, the effect of the whole cannot be assessed from the parts and you definitely

can’t draw direct conclusions from one constituent.

Likewise, you can’t draw accurate conclusions about citronella by testing isolated methyleugenol. But, of course, outcomes from the Ames test on methyleugenol are being used as evidence to withdraw citronella even though methyleugenol can be found in bananas, black pepper and bilberries and the EPA in the US considers citronella to be safe ([www.epa.gov/oppsrrd1/REDs/3105red.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/oppsrrd1/REDs/3105red.pdf))

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The amount of double-speak surrounding the issue is incredible. Even though topical preparations of citronella are being pulled and Canadian health stores have had product seized and verbal stop-sale warnings have been issued to suppliers, citronella's addition to cigarettes is just fine because it doesn't *increase* carcinogenicity. (See "toxicity" heading at this link: <http://tobaccoinformation.bhp.doh.gov.tw/toxicfolder/011.%E5%B8%9D%E5%9C%8B%E8%8F%B8%E8%8D%89/057.pdf> ). And when talking about Deet carcinogenicity, despite Swedish human studies showing that an increased rate of exposure increased testicular cancer, <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/consultations/deet/carcinogenicity.html>, the conclusion stated: "Interpret the results with caution" and "These data do not necessarily suggest that long-term use of DEET could cause testicular cancer." Also take a look at the "Health Effects in Humans" tab at this link where it states: "Case reports of toxicity from DEET exposure have been documented in the medical literature and range in severity from mild skin irritation to death." Death! Or as reported on ABC's Primetime Live segment on the issue: rashes, dizziness and seizures in adults and brain disorders, seizures and even (yes) death in children from Deet. See also [http://www.toxicsinfo.org/pests/lyme\\_deet.htm](http://www.toxicsinfo.org/pests/lyme_deet.htm)

Compare this to the documented side effects for citronella; [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com) states, "Citronella oil seems to be safe for most people when applied to the skin as an insect repellent. However, it might cause skin allergies in some people." [www.webmd.com/vitamins-supple-](http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-supple-)

[ments/ingredientmono-627-CITRONELLA%20OIL.aspx?activeIngredientId=627&activeIngredientName=CITRONELLA%20OIL](http://www.webmd.com/vitamins-supplements/ingredientmono-627-CITRONELLA%20OIL.aspx?activeIngredientId=627&activeIngredientName=CITRONELLA%20OIL)

Hmmm, skin allergies versus death for documented side effects – and the one that produces death is still on the market.

To approve a natural health product, Health Canada requires two human trials to approve its claim even if there is a mountain of test-tube evidence for one or more of its constituents. But to pull citronella, it is using "reasonable anticipation" that one of its constituents *may* pose a threat to humans. Of course, "may" automatically implies "may not" and there's zero actual data that citronella is dangerous to humans.

But it doesn't end there. Suppose you say, "OK, I won't use citronella topically, I'll just use it on patches stuck to my clothes, something many have found very effective." Well, Health Canada is ordering these off the market as well. So I found it no coincidence when I recently saw a commercial for Johnson & Johnson's OFF repellent clip-on device. Now, it is all starting to make sense.

Do you get the picture? The boom has come from above and multi-nationals/pharmaceutical companies have Health Canada in their back pocket. And the agency is only too willing to comply because after all, if we get another West-Nile scare, bug-repellent will be big business. Given methyleugenol's presence in several other essential oils, such as rose, basil, anise and nutmeg to name a few, don't be surprised if these also come under attack in the future. Once again, bureaucrat-

ic regulation based on a false premise of public protection is being used to make competition for the big boys illegal. Sound familiar? It's happening to our supplements as well.

How far, as Canadians, are we willing to let this go, without holding our politicians and bureaucrats accountable? If this upsets you, do something about it. Call your government offices and let them know exactly how you feel, politely of course, and remember to request a response.


Find your MP using your postal code: [www.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Compilations/HouseOfCommons/MemberByPostalCode.aspx?Menu=HOC](http://www.parl.gc.ca/Parlinfo/Compilations/HouseOfCommons/MemberByPostalCode.aspx?Menu=HOC)

Contact the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of Health at 613-957-0200 by email: [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/contact/ahc-asc/minist-eng.php](mailto:www.hc-sc.gc.ca/contact/ahc-asc/minist-eng.php), or write to:


The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, P.C., M.P.  
Health Canada  
Brooke Claxton Building, Tunney's Pasture  
Postal Locator: 0906C  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0K9


Contact Glenda Yeates, Deputy Minister of Health at 613-957-0212, or [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/contact/ahc-asc/deputy-sous-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/contact/ahc-asc/deputy-sous-eng.php), or write to:

Deputy Minister's Office  
Health Canada

(See address above for the Health Minister) 

**John Biggs** (BSc, NCP) is a nutritional consulting practitioner and the owner of Optimum Health Vitamins in Alberta. [www.optimumhealthvitamins.com](http://www.optimumhealthvitamins.com)






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# NEWSBITES

## First Nations to enforce ban on trophy bear hunt

First Nations on BC's North and Central Coast have declared a ban on the trophy bear hunt in their traditional territories. "We will protect bears from cruel and unsustainable trophy hunts by any and all means," says Kitasoo/Xaixais First Nation Chief Doug Neasloss. "The trophy bear hunt is an issue that has been brewing in First Nations communities for several years. Despite years of effort by the Coastal First Nations to find a resolution to this issue with the province, this senseless and brutal trophy hunt continues.

Jessie Housty, a councillor with the Heiltsuk Nation, says bears are often gunned down by trophy hunters near shorelines as they forage for food. "It's not a part of our culture to kill an animal for sport and hang them on a wall. When we go hunting, it's for sustenance purposes, not trophy hunting. Only a total ban on trophy hunting will ensure bear populations can support the tourism opportunities that add valuable income to our communities, says Housty. "Trophy hunting is a threat to the lucrative ecotourism industry that we are creating. Tourists often come back year after year to watch the same bears and their young grow."

Because the province is negligent in its responsibility to monitor the trophy hunt, the Coastal First Nations will now assume responsibility for bear management on the Coast, Neasloss says. "We will now assume the authority to monitor and enforce a closure of this senseless trophy hunt."

*From Coastal First Nations Great Bear Initiative, [www.coastalfirstnations.ca](http://www.coastalfirstnations.ca)*

## Local eco-friendly Tiffin Project saves diners \$\$

A Vancity-backed social entrepreneur is launching Vancouver's first attempt to tackle our eat-and-toss disposable container habits, while supporting local agriculture. The Tiffin Project's container is a leak-proof metal unit that gets you discounts on meals at 10 restaurants and takeaways (and growing) in Vancouver, with plans for 17 in the next six months. It is made of food-grade stainless steel by Onyx Containers. The Tiffin Project ([www.tiffinproject.com](http://www.tiffinproject.com)) reduces restaurant industry waste, supports local agriculture and aims to change the eat-and-toss culture using positive incentives and community.

A portion of the sale of all Tiffin Project containers goes toward shifting the initiative's restaurant partners to improve their own eco-habits by acquiring more of their ingredients from local producers. By the fall harvest of 2013, the Tiffin Project Foundation Fund will give funds to participating restaurants to pay the difference between the current price of local produce and the current price of imported produce. For consumers, a Tiffin will be less costly and healthier and improve the community by reducing our food miles and supporting local agriculture.

Consumers buy in to The Tiffin Project by purchasing a \$24 Tiffin from participating restaurants. They then receive discount incentives when they go to any participating restaurant or takeaway with their Tiffin.

Tiffin Project founder Hunter Moyes is a Vancouver-area chef who has been behind Burgoo, The Waldorf Hotel (Nuba) and most-recently Tacofino. He is also a food writer for Urban Diner, a sustainable seafood ambassador with the David Suzuki Foundation and a frequent partner of Oxfam's Western Canadian campaigns. For more information about Onyx Containers, visit [www.thetickletrunk.com](http://www.thetickletrunk.com)

## Proposition 37 naysayers litter radio ads with lies

The Yes on 37 California Right to Know Campaign has released a fact sheet documenting numerous falsehoods in the No on 37 campaign's first radio ads, which ran in September.

"When voters hear campaign ads, we urge them to consider the credibility of the source and check the facts for themselves," says Gary Ruskin, campaign manager for California Right to Know. "The same chemical companies that lied about the safety of Agent Orange and DDT are now financing the \$32 million campaign to keep Californians in the dark about what is in their food. The No on 37 campaign's first radio ad is a fitting tribute to this legacy because the only shred of truth it contains is in the disclaimer that lists the special interests who paid for it."

Below are just a few of the false statements in the No on *continued p.22...*



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... Newsbites from p.20

37 campaign's first radio ad:

**False claim #1:** Prop 37 was written by trial lawyers for trial lawyers.

**Truth:** The California Right to Know campaign began with the efforts of Pamm Larry, a former midwife, farmer and long-time Chico resident. In 2011, Pamm started organizing mothers and volunteers across the state toward a 2012 ballot drive with only one goal in mind – to let California consumers know if the food they are eating contains Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), which a growing body of peer reviewed research links to human health risks and environmental problems. With the help of thousands of volunteers across the state, the Right to Know campaign gathered nearly one million signatures from California voters within a 10-week period. The initiative itself was written by a group of industry, science and health experts.

**False claim #2:** Prop. 37 is being pushed by special interests.

**Truth:** Nearly one million individuals – parents, grandparents, business people, women, farmers, nurses and everyday Californians – helped to put Prop 37 on the ballot. Thousands of individuals have made contributions (most of them for less than \$100) to support the Yes on 37 campaign. Prop 37 is endorsed by a broad coalition of more than 2,000 groups including farm, public health, environmental, food safety organizations and local businesses. By contrast, the No on 37 campaign is supported and financed entirely by special interests, most of which are not located in California. More than half the funding for No on 37 is from the six largest pesticide companies.

**False claim #3:** Prop. 37 bans genetically engineered foods.

**Truth:** Prop. 37 bans nothing. It merely requires labelling of GMO-containing foods with the phrase “partially produced with genetic engineering” or “may be partially produced with genetic engineering” and it gives companies 18 months to change their labels. This type of labelling is already required in 50 countries around the world. The No on 37 campaign's largest funder, the Monsanto Company, even produced a series of ads in Europe touting the benefits of GMO labelling and the importance of consumers' right to know. Yet here in California they are spending more than \$7 million to defeat our right to know.

For more information and to support Proposition 37, visit [www.carighttoknow.org](http://www.carighttoknow.org)




### Fragile victory for Burns Bog

The Burns Bog Conservation Society is thrilled to announce the Government of Canada has joined 20,682 hectares of Lower Mainland wetlands into the newly renamed Fraser River Delta Ramsar Site. The new Ramsar site designation includes all of Burns Bog and affirms the area's deep ecological significance to BC and the international community. Burns Bog is the southernmost and largest raised peat bog on the west coast of North America. It is located between the municipalities of Delta and Richmond in the Metro Vancouver area.

The new Ramsar site designation comes as the area is threatened by development proposals. This includes the South Fraser Perimeter Road and a rezoning application by MK Delta Lands Group. "As wonderful as the Ramsar designation is, it won't stop the destruction of Burns Bog unless the federal government honours its commitments to the Ramsar Convention," says Olson. Over 2,000 people have signed a petition to stop the development of 89 acres of unprotected bogland at Highway 91 and 72nd Avenue. Visit [www.burnsbog.org](http://www.burnsbog.org) to sign the petition.

*From Burns Bog Conservation Society*

### Aftershock raises money for Haiti

Two years have passed since a catastrophic earthquake and more than 52 aftershocks ripped through Haiti. And yet not much has changed in this impoverished island nation. Only 8% of the ensuing two million tons of rubble have been cleared and communicable diseases are still rampant. Even before the quake, Haiti was one of the poorest countries in the western hemisphere. Now, it is quite possibly the poorest country in the world. Project Aftershock is dedicated to assisting medical relief efforts in Haiti through fundraising. [www.projectaftershock.org](http://www.projectaftershock.org) 

### Correction: "My Food, My Medicine, My Choice" (September 2012)

In the article noted above, it was stated incorrectly that Truehope's EmpowerPlus had been assigned an NPN. It should have stated that its product EMP had been assigned an NPN. The only difference between these two products is that EmpowerPlus contains 1.2 mg of boron and EMP does not.



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# The Trouble With Normal



## A new take on a Cockburn classic

sense – was a case of things getting better for a great many people, in a hardcore, historical manner. Similarly, the abolition of hanging in Britain and the elimination of the death penalty in other industrialized democracies (other than the USA), introduced another new ‘normal.’

Another good example: homosexuality wasn’t removed from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual Of Mental Disorders* until 1973 and since then gay marriage has become normalized in many jurisdictions, in spite of the continuing efforts of religious fundamentalists to push back the clock. Civil rights are now commonly extended to transgendered people as well.

It also used to be acceptable for North American and European parents to strike children like gongs. Over the past half-century, “corporal punishment” has become far less acceptable. Ditto for child sexual abuse, which was swept under the rug for centuries. Today doctors, psychologists and health care workers acknowledge the reality of pedophilism. The criminal justice system often prosecutes the perps when they are exposed, addressing at least a fraction of a widespread phenomenon that was once dismissed or disbelieved. Again, normal didn’t get worse, it got better in terms of enlightened behaviour and the reduction of human suffering. The same goes for the status of women with the rise of feminism.

It’s as if ripples of compassion have grown across the world and continue to expand, encompassing beings other than older, white, straight males. There are now efforts to extend rights to nonhuman life, including mountain gorillas and cetaceans. Perhaps one day, animal rights will be as obvious to us as our own – assuming large species continue to exist in places other than zoos and picture books.

As for our understanding of space and time, it was once normal to believe the world is flat. In scripture, Joshua commanded the Sun to stand still, which was all the proof anyone needed that the whole shebang revolved around “man” – paradoxically both God’s greatest creation and His biggest disappointment. For centuries, planets were seen as embedded in heavenly crystalline gears and stars were pinpricks in the cosmic firmament. Today, it’s not considered abnormal to believe the universe extends to unimaginable scales of space and time, and that stars are vast balls of gas that cook up all the higher elements essential for the formation of Earth-like planets. Our Milky Way galaxy alone may harbour more extraterrestrial species than a Star Wars bar scene on St. Patrick’s Day. This viewpoint could be read as either an improvement over the old, anthropocentric ‘normal’ or proof of Satan’s talent at trickery.

The same applies to the present understanding of infectious diseases. We know they are caused by bacteria and viruses, not pestilent vapours, witchcraft or the “evil eye.” The average life expectancy has steadily risen across much of the world over the past hundred years, primarily through the introduction of sanitary water networks. Smallpox has been eradicated globally. Cholera and other scourges have been all but erased in the industrialized democracies.

**C**allous men in business costume speak computerese  
Play pinball with the Third World trying to keep  
it on its knees

Their single crop starvation plans put sugar in your tea  
And the local Third World’s kept on reservations you don’t see  
“It’ll all go back to normal if we put our nation first”  
But the trouble with normal is it always gets worse.

Yes, it’s undeniable that economic hit men and their jackals have kept the global south in misery for decades through crippling debt and “structural adjustment,” following up on the colonial legacy of guns, jerks and steel. And yes, there is an imperial struggle for global control tarted up as a war on terror, which is being used to narrow or eliminate domestic freedoms.

After a half-century postwar boom, the overproduction chickens are coming home to roost while the bankers laugh all the way to their gated McCastles. Decades of outsourcing North American labour in a globalized race to the bottom are “bringing the Third World home,” as MIT media critic Noam Chomsky long warned us. Cronyism, corruption and disaster capitalism are going gangbusters, as income disparities grow to levels not seen in North America since the last Gilded Age. Electoral democracy has been reduced to spectacle: a tightly scripted reality TV series sponsored by the same fat cats who select the stars and game the outcome.

I can imagine a future paramilitary state that’s two parts Orwell and one part Huxley, with mood-altering drugs dispensed to the 99 percent to keep them from killing the remaining fraction in their sleep. These are all mad, bad trends on what writer William Burroughs called our “radioactive, run-down, cop-ridden planet.”

But let’s not forget that, in just a little over two decades, the Internet has gone from an obscure plaything for university geeks to a planetary information exchange for billions. Cyberspace is not all just online poker, sexting and cat videos, and here is the important part: this emergent novelty was completely unpredictable at the time Cockburn penned his song.

**E**mergent novelty is the wild card. Billions of years ago, life on our oxygen-free planet was limited to anaerobic bacteria and blue-green algae. If normal always got worse, these tiny *continued p.46...*

Bruce Cockburn - still making memes after all these years

**I**f kvetching was an Olympic category, I’d be up there on the podium wearing a furrowed brow and bronze medal. I can think of at least two friends who would be next to me with the silver and gold. When a group of us get together for lunch to discuss current events, it’s game on. Not only is the glass half-empty, the water quality is suspect and the drinking vessel looks dodgy, too. We can decode any cloud’s silver lining as the glint of Damocles’ sword.

As we unpack the bad craziness of the daily disaster-feed, I can always count on one of my companions to get a weary, far-away look before reciting, for the umpteenth time, a lyric from a 1983 song by Canadian folk singer Bruce Cockburn: “The trouble with normal is it always gets worse.”

Standards are always slipping; what was once unthinkable or unacceptable is redefined as the new normal. As Cockburn put it:

*Strikes across the frontier and strikes for higher wage  
Planet lurches to the right as ideologies engage  
Suddenly it’s repression, moratorium on rights  
What did they think the politics of panic would invite?  
Person in the street shrugs – “Security comes first”  
But the trouble with normal is it always gets worse.*

*The Trouble With Normal*, from a synth-driven 1983 album of the same name, rings as true today as it did a quarter-century back. But does normal always get worse, as my friend insists? I may lose my pessimist’s punch card for saying this, but I don’t think it does. Not if we step back and take in a wider horizon of space and time.

To take one obvious example, for millennia, it was ‘normal’ for human beings to own other human beings as livestock. The end of officially sanctioned slavery across the globe – at least in the slave ship if not the sweatshop



to be the aim of saving, after all: to increase one's net worth. The result was a financial "balance sheet boom," not the kind of expansion or business cycle that industrial capitalism generated.

As this process unfolded "on the way up," financial lobbyists applauded the asset-price inflation for real estate, stocks and bonds as "wealth creation." But it was making the economy less competitive, as seen most clearly in the de-industrialization of the United States. Debt-leveraged real estate required families to pay higher prices for housing – in the form of mortgage interest – and pension funds to pay higher prices for the stocks and bonds they buy to pay retirement incomes. That is the problem with the Bubble Economy. It is debt-driven. This debt is the "product" of the banking and financial sector.

When asset prices finally collapse to reflect the debtor's ability to pay (and the falling market price of collateral bought on credit), these debts remain in place. The "final stage" of the Bubble Economy occurs when foreclosure time arrives and debt-ridden economies shrink into Negative Equity. That is the stage in which the U.S. and European economies are mired today. Economic jargon has called it a "balance sheet recession" – the counterpart to the "balance sheet boom" that was the essence of the preceding Bubble Economy.

The process became political quite quickly. Banks and high finance sought to shift their losses onto the economy at large. As debts went bad in 2008, Wall Street turned to the government for bailouts, and demanded that the Federal Reserve and Treasury take their bad loans onto the public balance sheet. This has occurred from the United States to Ireland. The effect was to increase U.S. federal debt by over \$13 trillion – without running a deficit of this magnitude, but simply by taking Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac onto the public balance sheet (\$5.3 trillion), by the Federal Reserve swapping \$2 trillion in newly created deposit liabilities in a "cash for trash" swap with Citibank, Bank of America and other banks that were the worst offenders in making junk mortgages, and with other policies confined to the balance sheet, not current spending.

This vast increase in money and credit was not inflationary. At least, it did not increase consumer prices,



## Gold convertibility was ended in 1971 in response to the Vietnam War's drain on the U.S. balance of payments.

commodity prices or wages. The aim was indeed to increase asset prices, but the banks were not lending, given the fact that debt deflation was engulfing the entire economy. So the traditional monetary formula  $MV=PT$  became irrelevant. Asset prices were the key, not prices for goods and services – and asset prices could not rise as long as so many assets were in negative equity. So money

creation became a pure giveaway to the financial sector – a "transfer payment," not a payment for the purchase or sale of a consumer good or investment good.

*The Bubble and Beyond* discusses the global dimension of "socializing" (or more to the point, oligarchizing) unpayably high debts. The world's money supply



**The process became political quite quickly. Banks and high finance sought to shift their losses onto the economy at large. As debts went bad in 2008, Wall Street turned to the government for bailouts, and demanded that the Federal Reserve and Treasury take their bad loans onto the public balance sheet. This has occurred from the United States to Ireland. The effect was to increase U.S. federal debt by over \$13 trillion.**

now rests ultimately on government debt – and the government's acceptance of this debt as money in payment of taxes and public services. Yet there is something fictitious about all this: the debts can't be paid!

The most obviously unpayable are those of the U.S. Government. This makes these debts "fictitious," inasmuch as dollar holders are unable to convert their savings into tangible assets, goods or services. Gold convertibility was ended in 1971 in response to the Vietnam War's drain on the U.S. balance of payments. Yet the dollar has remained the foundation of most central bank reserves even as the U.S. trade deficit deepened as the economy was post-industrialized while overseas military spending has escalated. This military dimension grounds the global financial system in U.S. military hegemony.

This has prompted the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) to seek an alternative payments and debt-settlement system so as not to base their international savings on a system that finances their military encirclement. As it stands the dollar standard provides a free lunch for the U.S. economy ("debt imperialism"), above all for its government to create money without regard for the ability (not to mention the will) to pay.

If the dollar deficit were used to promote peaceful economic development in an atmosphere of global disarmament, the rest of the world would be more willing to see the U.S. Treasury act as global money creator on

its electronic computer keyboards. But when this is done for national self-interest that other countries see as being at odds with their own aspirations, the system becomes politically as well as financially unstable. That is the position in which the world economy finds itself today.

It became even less stable when the Federal Reserve provided \$800 billion in credit to U.S. banks in 2011 under the Quantitative Easing (QE2), which the banks used to make easy money on international interest-rate and foreign currency arbitrage. Given the refusal of Congress to permit China or other countries to buy major American industrial assets (e.g., as when CNOOK was blocked from buying Unocal), and financial deregulation leading to decriminalization of financial frauds (as in the "toxic waste" of subprime mortgage packages), the world's monetary system is in the process of fracturing into regional blocks.

What is not clear is what kind of regulatory, financial and tax philosophy will guide these blocs. At best, the world will return to the debates that marked economic discussion a century ago on the eve of World War I. At issue is whether the financial sector will translate its recent gains into the political power to take debt and financial policy out of the hands of elected government representatives and agencies and shift economic planning and tax policy into the hands of a super-national central bank authority controlled by bank lobbyists.

The lesson of history is that this would be a disaster of historic proportions, because the financial time frame is short-term and its business strategy is extractive, not productive. I hope the papers in this volume will serve as an antidote to the head start that financial lobbyists have achieved in sacrificing economies to austerity in what must be a vain attempt to pay debts under adverse financial conditions that make them less and less payable. By distinguishing tangible wealth creation from debt overhead and other rentier overhead – the task of classical political economy, after all – the policy debate can be cast in a manner that reverses the financial sector's attempt to replace realistic analysis with euphemistic lobbying efforts and what best can be characterized as junk economics rather than empirical science. ◀

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## StarWise

**October 2012**

A BLINDFOLDED Goddess with a sword in one hand and scales in the other rules over the sign Libra. She represents impartial justice, balance, order and harmony. The Sun transits Libra until October 22. Libra is a Cardinal/Air sign bringing intellectual and artistic gifts to those born in this sign. The Sun forms a triangle with Jupiter in the first half of October, bringing opportunities to set things right. The Sun-Jupiter triangle brings hope, faith, trust and a cooperative spirit into the mix. The point of the drill is in using planetary awareness (astrology) to help assist us in dealing with the myriad complicated social and political concerns of the day. When we come across a giant boulder that needs to be moved, we know our human strength will not get it to budge one inch. If we apply a long enough pole and fulcrum, we can move the boulder easily. The planetary aspects, such as the Sun trine Jupiter, are our fulcrum and pole and when used wisely we can literally move mountains. Yes, there is magic in the stars. It is God's handiwork.

In Ecclesiastes, it is written we have a time to weep and a time to laugh. A time to mourn and a time to dance, a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war



**ARIES** Mar 21 - Apr 19

Your Sun is in Aries and the Sun moves through through Libra for the first three weeks of October. It's your solar low of the year. It is time for some introspection, reflection and possible redirection of your energies and efforts to find the balance in all things. You may hunger for something deeper.



**TAURUS** Apr 20 - May 21

Saturn casts his stern glance from your opposite sign Scorpio over the next couple of years. It's all about time and how you use it. Taurus, being a fixed sign, has its blessings and curses. The blessing is steadfastness, the curse, obstinacy and stubbornness. You may want to comply and concur rather than oppose and suffer.



**GEMINI** May 22 - Jun 20

I wish I were a Gemini in order to take advantage of the opportunities that Jupiter is bringing while he visits Gemini. He brings warmth, confidence, good luck and good timing. It's highly likely that life's activities are going to get ramped up as Mars casts his energy your way along with Jupiter in October and November.



**CANCER** Jun 21 - Jul 22

It is time to prepare for the future. By your birthday next year, Jupiter will have entered your sign bringing untold blessings and opportunities for growth and advancement. Don't wait, don't hesitate, but start now. Move towards your goals, study and work hard and it will pay in its own way and day.



**LEO** Jul 23 - Aug 22

Mars and Jupiter throw good energies your way throughout the month. The Sun assists as well, Uranus too. All combined, the equation is that you are able to relate and communicate with all kinds of people from all aspects of life. Your timing is good and your resolve is strong and others pick up on it.



**VIRGO** Aug 23 - Sep 22

Lovely Venus pays a visit for most of the month. Well, she's lovely most of the time; at other times, Venus helps us to reflect on how we're really doing and some of the material may not be comfortable. There's nothing like a good catharsis to re-align our values, principals, goals and ideals.

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and a time for peace. Astrology is the cosmic clock and timekeeper for all terrestrial activities and events. Speaking of events, we have the US presidential elections taking place on November 6. After a lengthy study of Barack Obama and Mitt Romney's horoscopes, I have come to the conclusion Obama will win. But hold on a minute. Remember the Bush/Gore race? It took place on November 7, 2000. Mercury, the planet ruling communications, was standing still, which is an indicator that things could go wrong and they certainly did. Well, guess what folks? Yep, good old Mercury retrograde takes place on November 6 and Mercury is standing still again as he prepares to back up along the ecliptic for a few weeks.

We know Mercury retrograde phenomena is strongly linked to all types of communication and transportation concerns. It may be a concern if Romney does get elected, as he is hawkish and willing to fight. Let's keep an eye on this one and see where the world gets to, post November 6. Saturn will be in Scorpio starting on October 5 and this combination will bring its secrets, plans, plots and machinations to the surface over the next couple of years. ☐



#### LIBRA Sep 23 - Oct 22

It's your time to shine as the Sun moves through your sign. Saturn moves out of Libra in early October. The stern taskmaster has left some powerful impressions and deep lessons that may have carved some wisdom into your soul. A whirlwind fall season speeds by in a blink of an eye. Enjoy and rejoice.



#### SCORPIO Oct 23 - Nov 21

Scorpios are old souls. In this incarnation, Scorpio is inclined to truly help mankind as they themselves have garnered a deep wisdom from the hoary past. The events destined to come to pass in the next two years will set your course for many years to come. Now is a time of correction and redirection.



#### SAGITTARIUS Nov 22 - Dec 21

Talk about intense. This is it. Mars visits Sagittarius throughout the month bringing an injection of energy, excitement, action and competition. Plus lord Jupiter casts his energy your way as well, bringing luck and fortune into the play. Mars and Jupiter oppose in the last days of October ramping up everything. Think twice, cut once.

**Mac McLaughlin** has been a practising, professional astrologer for more than four decades. His popular **Straight Stars** column ran in Vancouver's largest weekly newspaper for 11 years. Email [mac@macsstars.com](mailto:mac@macsstars.com) or call 604-731-1109



#### CAPRICORN Dec 22 - Jan 19

Your career sector is hot. You learn a lot from secret sources throughout the month. No one can really outwork you or put in the same devotion to any subject at hand. Your instinct is to go deep and you should; think long-term while you're at it. Shed the past and move forward.



#### AQUARIUS Jan 20 - Feb 19

Seize the day, seize the month and if you don't, no big deal, but a very precious window of time has arrived, especially in the first half of October. If you want to get somewhere with your life, use the stars as your fulcrum and pole and make leverage now. Read the introduction.



#### PISCES Feb 20 - Mar 20

Mercury and Saturn cast their energy into your sign bringing helpful news and information throughout the month. Now that Neptune has settled into Pisces for a very long visit, you can utilize Neptune's energy to align yourself with your higher principals of compassion, love and service to all those who are suffering. New realities are dawning.



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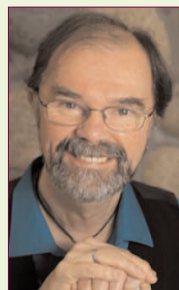


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SPiRiT

# Going beyond limitation

Some people who surrender to severe limitation become healers or spiritual teachers. Others work selflessly to lessen human suffering or bring some creative gift into this world. In the late seventies, I would have lunch every day with one or two friends in the cafeteria of the graduate centre at Cambridge University where I was studying. A man in a wheelchair would sometimes sit at a nearby table, usually accompanied by three or four people. One day, when he was sitting at a table directly opposite me, I could not help but look at him more closely and I was shocked by what I saw. He seemed almost totally paralyzed. His body was emaciated, his head permanently slumped forward. One of the people accompanying him was carefully putting food in his mouth, a great deal of which would fall out again and be caught on a small plate another man was holding under his chin. Occasionally the wheelchair-bound man would produce unintelligible croaking sounds and someone would hold an ear close to his mouth and then amazingly would interpret what he was trying to say.

Stephen Hawking... commenting upon his life,

said – now with the help of the voice synthesizer

– “Who could have wished for more?”

Later, I asked my friend whether he knew who he was. “Of course,” he said. “He is a professor of mathematics and the people with him are his graduate students. He has motor neuron disease that progressively paralyzes every part of the body. He has been given five years at the most. It must be the most dreadful fate that can befall a human being.”

A few weeks later, as I was leaving the building, he was coming in and when I held the door open for his electric wheelchair to come through, our eyes met. With surprise, I saw that his eyes were clear. There was no trace in them of unhappiness. I knew immediately he had relinquished resistance; he was living in surrender. A number of years later when buying a newspaper at a kiosk, I was amazed to see him on the front page of a popular international news magazine. Not only was he still alive, but he had by then become the world’s most famous theoretical physicist, Stephen Hawking. There was a beautiful line in the article that confirmed what I had sensed when I had looked into his eyes many years earlier. Commenting upon his life, he said – now with the help of the voice synthesizer – “Who could have wished for more?”

## The joy of being

Unhappiness or negativity is a disease on our planet. What pollution is on the outer level is negativity on the inner. It is everywhere, not just in places where people don’t have enough, but even more so where they have more than enough. Is that surprising? No. The affluent world is even more deeply identified with form, more lost in content, more trapped in ego.

People believe themselves to be dependent on what happens for their happiness, that is to say, dependent on form. They don’t realize that what happens is the most unstable thing in the universe. It changes constantly. They look upon the present moment as either marred by something that has happened and shouldn’t have or as deficient because of something that has not happened but should have. And so they miss the deeper perfection that is inherent in life itself, a perfection that is always already here, that lies beyond what is happening or not happening, beyond form. Accept the present moment and find the perfection



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Paramahansa Nithyananda is a world teacher in yoga, kundalini and enlightenment sciences. As head of the world's oldest Hindu establishment, Madurai Aadheenam, he is revered as an incarnation of superconsciousness by millions.



that is deeper than any form and untouched by time. The joy of Being, which is the only true happiness, cannot come to you through any form, possession, achievement, person or event – through anything that happens. That joy cannot come to you – ever. It emanates from the formless dimension within you, from consciousness itself and thus is one with who you are.

#### Allowing the diminishment of the ego

The ego is always on guard against any kind of perceived diminishment. Automatic ego-repair mechanisms come into effect to restore the mental form of “me.” When someone blames or criticizes me, that, to the ego, is a diminishment of self and it will immediately attempt to repair its diminished sense of self through self-justification, defense or blaming. Whether the other person is right or wrong is irrelevant to the ego. It is much more interested in self-preservation than in the truth. This is the preservation of the psychological form of “me.” Even such a normal thing as shouting something back when another driver calls you “idiot” is an automatic and unconscious ego-repair mechanism. One of the most common ego-repair mechanisms is anger, which causes a temporary but huge ego inflation. All repair mechanisms make perfect sense to the ego but are actually dysfunctional. Those that are most extreme in their dysfunction are physical violence and self-delusion in the form of grandiose fantasies.

A powerful spiritual practice is consciously to allow the diminishment of ego when it happens with-

out attempting to restore it. I recommend that you experiment with this from time to time. For example, when someone criticizes you, blames you or calls you names, instead of immediately retaliating or defending yourself – do nothing. Allow the self-image to remain diminished and become alert to what that feels like deep inside you. For a few seconds, it may feel uncomfortable, as if you had shrunk in size. Then you may sense an inner spaciousness that feels intensely alive. You haven’t been diminished at all. In fact, you have expanded.

You may then come to an amazing realization: When you are seemingly diminished in some way and remain in absolute non-reaction, not just externally but also internally, you realize that nothing real has been diminished, that through becoming “less,” you become more. When you no longer defend or attempt to strengthen the form of yourself, you step out of identification with form, with mental self-image. Through becoming less (in the ego’s perception), you, in fact, undergo an expansion and make room for Being to come forward. True power, who you are beyond form, can then shine through the apparently weakened form. This is what Jesus means when he says, “Deny yourself” or “Turn the other cheek.”

This does not mean, of course, that you invite abuse or turn yourself into a victim of unconscious people. Sometimes, a situation may demand that you tell someone to “back off” in no uncertain terms. Without egoic defensiveness, there will be power behind your words, yet no reactive force. If necessary, you

can also say no to someone firmly and clearly and it will be what I call a “high-quality no” that is free of all negativity. If you are content with being nobody in particular, content not to stand out, you align yourself with the power of the universe. What looks like weakness to the ego is, in fact, the only true strength. This spiritual truth is diametrically opposed to the values of our contemporary culture and the way it conditions people to behave.

Instead of trying to be a mountain, teaches the ancient *Tao Te Ching*, “Be the valley of the universe.” In this way, you are restored to wholeness and so “all things will come to you.” Similarly, Jesus, in one of his parables, teaches that “When you are invited, go and sit in the lowest place so that when your host comes, he may say to you, friend, move up higher. Then you will be honoured in the presence of all who sit at table with you. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Another aspect of this practice is to refrain from attempting to strengthen the self by showing off, wanting to stand out, be special, make an impression or demand attention. It may include occasionally refraining from expressing your opinion when everybody is expressing his or hers and seeing what that feels like. <

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# Work, money and miracles

## Law of Divine Compensation

**N**o matter what is happening in our lives, we choose how we wish to think about it. And the greatest gift we give ourselves is often our willingness to change our minds. Despite what might seem to be the saddest and most intractable situation, we have the power to believe that something else is possible, that things can change, that a miracle can happen.

This simple shift in how we think can make all the difference in what happens next. How we think releases an infinite number of possibilities that could not have occurred had we not believed that they were possible. Such is the power of our thoughts to attract as well as deflect miraculous breakthroughs.

Free will means you can think whatever you want to think. You cannot, however, make untrue what is true or true what is untrue. The universe does care about you. The universe is set up to work on your behalf. And the universe is capable of bringing miraculous transformation to any situation of brokenness or lack. Regardless of what has happened in your life, the universe is able and prepared to bring you comfort and repair. You are loved and your purpose is to love. From a mind filled with infinite love comes the power to create infinite possibilities. We have the power to think in ways that reflect and attract all the love in the world. Such thinking is called enlightenment. Enlightenment is not a process we work toward, but a choice available to us in any instant.

Enlightenment is the answer to every problem. In any situation where you seem to be at the effect of forces over which you have no control, remember that God dwells within your mind and there are no forces over which He has no control. Therefore, through His power within you, there are no mortal conditions over which you are powerless. Whenever your good is obscured by the appearances of a nonloving world, the universe is programmed to lift you out of that condition and return you to an abundant state.

As an expression of divine perfection, the universe is both self-organizing and self-correcting. To whatever extent your mind is aligned with love, you will receive divine compensation for any lack in your material existence. From spiritual substance will come material manifestation. This is not just a theory; it is a fact. It is a law by which the universe operates. I call it the Law of Divine Compensation.

Just as there are objective, discernible laws of external phenomena, so there are objective, discernible laws of internal phenomena. The law of gravity, for instance, is not just a “belief.” It is true whether or not you believe it. Spiritual laws are not just beliefs either; they are descriptions of how consciousness operates.

Once we know this law – that there is a natural tendency of the universe to improve all things – then we lean naturally into the arms of God and allow Him to lift us up. We surrender our thoughts, then He uplifts



our thoughts, then our experiences change. The practical issue is whether we choose thoughts that activate or deactivate the Law of Divine Compensation. We activate it with every loving thought. We deactivate it when we give more credence to the reality and power of the material world than to the reality and power of love.

If our circumstances tempt us to think thoughts such as, “I must not be good enough,” “I will never have another chance,” “It will take forever for this to right itself,” or “I hate whoever is to blame for this,” then miracles, though they are programmed into the nature of the universe, cannot make their way into our awareness. With every thought we think, we either summon or block a miracle. It is not our circumstances, then, but rather our thoughts about our circumstances, that determine our power to transform them.


The Law of Divine Compensation applies equally to all situations. In a time of economic uncertainty – when circumstances make it particularly tempting to believe in the scarcity of the material plane over the abundance of the spiritual – our capacity to think differently is the miracle-worker’s edge. Bills stare you in the face. Foreclosure looms. Credit is wrecked. Jobs aren’t available. And with all that comes chaos on many fronts. Who doesn’t need a miracle then?

If you identify only with your body and its reality, rather than with your spirit and its reality, then you’re tempted to think that diminished material assets somehow diminish who you are. But you are not merely a being of the material world; you are a being of unlimited spirit. And in spirit there is no lack. You are not lacking just because your circumstances are.

If your core belief is “I lack” and you carry that

belief with you, then you will subconsciously perpetuate or create the circumstances that reflect the belief. But your circumstances are completely malleable; they simply reflect the dictates of your mind. Regardless of what limits exist in your material world, your immutable truth is that you are an unlimited spiritual being. By remembering this, you summon the Law of Divine Compensation. You are a loving idea in the Mind of God. Circumstances should not and need not tempt you to believe otherwise. The universe showers you with love, not because of what you have done or not done, but because of who you are. Think of the universe itself as a personal love note from God to you. God is love and in sharing His love, you share His power. By aligning yourself with thoughts of infinite love for yourself and others, you gain dominion over the lower thought forms of the world.

In a material sense, your situation might indeed be bleak. You might have been given a raw deal, even been betrayed by others. You yourself might have made a huge mistake. Still, what matters is what you think now: Are you lingering in the past or are you allowing for a miracle in the present? Are you blaming yourself and others or blessing yourself and others? Are you clinging to your faith in the reality of the disaster or opening your mind to the possibility of a miracle? Realign your thoughts with the thoughts of God and in any given instant the universe is ready to begin again. The laws of time and space are more malleable than we think.

Mistakes and wrong turns need not throw us off. The capacity for correction is built into the universe, just as it is into the workings of a GPS. If you’ve programmed an address into your GPS but then take a different turn than it recommends, the GPS automatically creates a new route. And so does the universe. Perhaps you thought you’d get to where you wanted to be financially through achieving a certain credential, doing a particular job or making a particular investment. But then something happened: the economy worsened, you made a mistake or someone else did. The Law of Divine Compensation gives us the assurance that the universe will simply create a new route. What is lacking shall become abundant and what is wounded shall be healed. From “out of the blue” – or miracle-mindedness – miracles will flow forth naturally. Why? Because perfection is your eternal home, to which the universe is programmed to return you whenever you have deviated, for whatever reason, from the thoughts that get and keep you there. That is how loved you are. 

Excerpted from **The Law of Divine Compensation: On Work, Money, and Miracles** by Marianne Williamson. Copyright 2012. Reprinted with permission by HarperOne, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers.





# Why worry?

*I've developed a new philosophy... I only dread one day at a time.*  
– Charlie Brown (Charles Schulz)

If I had to pick one thing that causes my clients the most discomfort, I would have to say it is worry. Anxiety is a more intense form of worry and can also have a biochemical component. It can also be a state unrelated to the external environment.

It is normal to worry about a biopsy result or when a teen is late and has not called. It is normal to worry about an exam or if the roads are icy. A certain amount of worry is part of being human.

It becomes a problem when worry is not just a normal momentary response to a troubling situation, but instead becomes a pattern of thinking. The mind seems to get stuck in worry mode. The worrying is continuous, but the focus of the worry can change or be directed to multiple issues.

At the core of such worry thinking is fear. Fear that things will go wrong, that we will not be able to manage, that we will not have control. Sometimes, worriers think their worrying allows them to anticipate and prepare for all eventualities. The truth is that worrying just does not work. The most terrible things that happen are usually unanticipated. Most of the things we do worry about never happen. In the meantime, we rob ourselves of whatever might be in this present moment, as we have filled it with our imagined, scary movies about the future.

It would be like going to see a great movie and then not paying attention to it because you were worrying you might have a car accident on the way home. Con-

Make a plan of action should the worst-case scenario manifest. That can help us deal with fears around an uncertain future.

ventional wisdom would say forget about later, just enjoy the movie now. That is a wise approach for life in general, but for most, it does take some work. Those who meditate are familiar with having to keep bringing the wandering mind back to centre. In daily life, it is the same with worry thoughts. Yes, they will come, but we keep bringing ourselves back into the present moment.

While we work on that, there are some practical strategies that can help with worry. When worrying about an outcome, whether it is a test result or waiting for someone to come home, always envision a positive outcome. If we are imagining anyway, we might as well imagine something good. We will feel better and who knows whether in the quantum world our positive thoughts might shift the balance in our direction?

If an ongoing worry takes up space in your head, write it all down and then brainstorm solutions. Make a plan of action should the worst-case scenario manifest. That can help us deal with fears around an uncertain future. If the worry comes back, write it all down again. Repeat the exercise as often as necessary. Eventually, the mind no longer bothers with the worry because it is all written down and has been dealt with as much as possible.

Another strategy is to practise thought stopping. Set aside a time to deal with worries and that means, of course, writing it all down. The goal is to take charge of the worry thoughts rather than allowing them to take charge of us.

Finally, one of my favourite strategies when worrying is to ask, “Am I okay right now?” Most always, I am okay right now because the worry is about the future. And the truth is all of our real life takes place in the “right now.”

**Gwen Randall-Young** is an author and psychotherapist in private practice. For articles and information about her books, CDs and “Creating Healthy Relationships” series, visit [www.gwen.ca](http://www.gwen.ca) See display ad this issue.

# Snatam Kaur

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# End the grizzly bear trophy hunt

First Nations historic declaration to ban the bear trophy hunt in the Great Bear Rainforest honours the spirit of late Nuxalk Chief Qwatsinas "Raven Spirit."


by Adam S. Sealey

photos: Ian McAllister [www.pacificwild.org](http://www.pacificwild.org)

**A**s you read this article, 10 BC Coastal First Nations, none of whom have ever ceded their land or signed a treaty, are standing up on principle and saying, "We are tired of bringing people to see bears only to find the bodies of dead ones with their paws cut off lying in river estuaries." They are declaring a ban on bear trophy hunting in their territory and declaring their own law, which, in effect, prohibits killing other than for food, and nobody eats bears. Grizzly bears are not edible. The BC government says the First Nations have no "jurisdiction" when it comes to the hunt, but this makes absolutely no sense. These people are the original inhabitants and have lived there sustainably for 10,000 years.

It's time to end the hunt. Why is it illegal to kill a white Spirit Bear, but okay to kill a grizzly bear? Or a black bear that has a one in 10 chance of giving birth to a white Spirit bear? Could it be because we don't want the world to know we allow rich hunters to shoot our 2010 Olympic mascot? That would be bad for our corporate image, wouldn't it? We're calling on our readers to help end this hypocrisy now.

All bears are important to our society, our history, our children and our collective morality and psychological

  
**We are tired of bringing people to see bears only to find the bodies of dead ones with their paws cut off lying in river estuaries.**

wellbeing. According to traditional and shamanic lore, the bear represents powerful medicine and meaning for all of us, including the quality of introspection and the awakening of the power of the unconscious. If a bear shows up in your life, ask yourself some questions. Is your judgment off? How about those around you? Are you not recognizing what is beneficial in your life? Are you being too critical of yourself or others? The constellation Ursus Major, The Great Bear, in the northern hemisphere, is also known as the Big Dipper and is linked to the seven great rays of light to the divine.

If you watch a bear closely, you'll see yourself and your children in their mannerisms and their social and family interactions. Because they are at the top of the

food chain, they have never really had to defend themselves against predators (until us) so they are generally relaxed, with the freedom to roam, play, socialize and express their individuality. They also enjoy a varied omnivorous diet more similar to ours than perhaps any other mammal. They eat sustainably. They take only what they need. They are our teachers and direct relatives.

During its winter sleep, the black bear's kidney shuts down completely. Scientists are studying this in hopes it may provide clues to more successful human kidney transplants. Can we really justify killing bears for any reason knowing this? I, along with the majority, say "no!"

In coastal peoples' creation stories, in the first world there was the star nation and in the second world (time), the plant kingdom came to be. Then, in the third world, mythological creatures inhabited the earth, like the bear, the eagle and the orca and many more. In the fourth world, many of these creatures removed their animal costumes and became human. The T'simshian people believe bears and humans can shift form from one to another. Still another creation story says that on an island called Itsa, just west of Bella Coola, the first woman came down from the heavens and from there spread out to become all of the indigenous coastal peoples. *continued p.36...*





Callan Rush

# New Wealth Formula?

**B**eing WEALTHY means 3 things:

- 1) FULFILLMENT: Being deeply fulfilled in what you do.
- 2) INCOME: Earning the amount of money that allows you to do what you want, when you want, and with whom.
- 3) IMPACT: The feeling you get when you know you're making a big difference in the lives of many people!

WEALTH, when put this way, is easy to understand... but not so easy to create. But don't worry! I've got a brilliant little formula that will make your journey to WEALTH faster and more enjoyable.

## Wealth = Volume x Intimacy

In this context, VOLUME refers to the amount of people who get exposed to your message, your products, your programs and your services.

In other words... how many people are actually being served by the things you've created and promoted? The more people you are serving... the more WEALTH you'll create for yourself.

INTIMACY refers to your ability to make a deep, significant TRANSFORMATION in the life of any person that decides to work with you. In other words, when people purchase your products, programs and services – their lives are positively and significantly impacted!

So, there it is... WEALTH = INTIMACY x VOLUME. YOU want to have a huge impact on a massive amount of people... so let's look at some very common ways of facilitating Transformation in your clients. We'll apply our new formula for wealth to each example and see how they stack up.

### EXAMPLE #1: "1-on-1 Sessions"

I got my start in business as a personal 'Life Coach.' I worked with my clients individually, helping them find and create everything they desired in their life and in their business.

I helped my clients make a Deep Transformation during the sessions for sure, but I could only work with a limited amount of people in one week. There are only so many hours in a day, after all! Even though the Intimacy was high, my Volume remained low... and therefore, my WEALTH was also low at that time of my life. I simply wasn't helping enough people.

### Result : HIGH INTIMACY x LOW VOLUME

In an effort to increase my wealth, I decided to up my Volume! I started to lead...

### EXAMPLE #2: Teleclasses & Webinars

This is an extremely common occurrence for Coaches, Practitioners and Heart-Centered Entrepreneurs looking to work with larger groups of clients.

I've been on a teleclass before that had 10 thousand people on the line at once! The Volume on teleclasses and webinars can be very, very high.

Unfortunately though, due to the distance and the fact that the level of personal interaction between the facilitator and the people on the phone/computer is low... the ability to deeply serve each participant is severely handicapped.

### Result : LOW INTIMACY x HIGH VOLUME

Let's look at one more...

### EXAMPLE #3: LIVE Workshops

In my business, I lead workshops for as few as 6-8

people at a time... and others for as many as 200 people at a time. The Volume of people I'm serving each year is very high... and, because each event is LIVE – the Intimacy I am creating when I am working with my clients is also very, very high!

I've found that leading Live Workshops, Retreats and Seminars is truly the SWEET SPOT where both the Volume and Intimacy can be kept as high as possible.

When VOLUME and INTIMACY are high, so is your capacity to create WEALTH. Workshops, retreats and seminars have the highest potential for revenue, impact, and personal fulfillment.

Whether you're leading Workshops, Retreats and Seminars already... or you're just looking to get that part of your business started... the next question you'll face is, "How do I fill my live workshops, retreats and seminars?"

For assistance with this, I highly recommend attending my Live Workshop entitled...

## "Fill Your Workshops... with EASE!" (Avoid the 3 Massive Mistakes Workshop Leaders Make that Keep Their Event Rooms Empty)


At this evening workshop, I'll take you through the absolute best ways to fill your LIVE, group workshops! Of course, what I share at the workshop will also help you fill your virtual events (teleclasses, webinars) and all your 1:1 sessions.

For dates, times and registration details, please see the box located below. I look forward to meeting you at the workshop... and helping you create a whole lot more WEALTH in your life.

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# Kundalini awakened

An interview with Snatam Kaur

**C**all it celestial communication, a chantfest, a musical group meditation or just a concert. Whatever you call it, an evening with Snatam Kaur is sure to be heavenly. And with a new band featuring Todd Boston, Ramesh Kannan and Matthew Shoenig, concertgoers will experience a transcendental touch of India, hallowed harmonies and even a bit of blessed bluegrass.

**Wendy DeMos:** Please tell us about your new band.

**Snatam Kaur:** I have absolutely loved everyone that I have had the honour to tour with over the years, especially my long-time musical partner GuruGanesha ([www.guruganesha.com](http://www.guruganesha.com)). Because of a creative shift within both myself and GuruGanesha a few years ago, we felt it was a natural time to go in different musical directions. Through very loving and honest communication, we realized we are both still very much dedicated to the same mission, of spreading the vibration of peace through music, with just a different style.

**WD:** What will we hear that is different?

**SK:** I am joined by Todd Boston ([www.toddbroston.com](http://www.toddbroston.com)) on guitar. He very much honours GuruGanesha's guitar style that I love, while bringing his own musical sound, which is opening up into areas of a slightly bluegrass style, mixed in with a delicate, classical Indian style. Todd really works with the acoustic elements of the guitar, with a beautiful tone and nice fluidity with the notes that he plays. Ramesh Kannan, who plays many percussion instruments including tabla, cajon, udu and symbols, has been with me for quite a few years now. I absolutely love playing with him. Not only are his rhythms so heartfelt and right on, but he also exudes an energy of joy and love that is very uplifting. What is a bit different this time is that we discovered that Ramesh is a great vocalist and so he will be adding his voice into the mix. We have also given much more space to Ramesh to open up into his different percussive instruments. This has been really fun. Probably the biggest shift we have made in terms of our elemental sound is the addition of the cello with Matthew Shoenig. This element in the mix has given us a much more full sound, with the lower notes of the cello allowing us to really soar. At times I feel that there is another vocalist right with me, singing along, and realize that it is the cello.

**WD:** Please talk a bit about this time of great shifts. How does your music contribute to this time of change?

**SK:** The sacred chant, or Gurbani Kirtan that our music carries forth into this world, is one of the most healing tools we have available to us on this planet. People talk about how it carries them through the most challenging experiences as if a light has come into their hearts and uplifted them. I totally believe in the power of these sacred words and that is why I have been touring for so many years, through thick and thin, to deliver this energy to people.

**WD:** Why is chanting important?

**SK:** The sacred chants that we share are in a simple way positive affirmations that work on a cellular level to change your vibration. You may not be feeling very happy and start chanting and after a few minutes your entire energy shifts. It happens like clockwork. It is beautiful to experience and witness.

**WD:** Would you talk about precise pronunciation of the chants?

**SK:** The pronunciation of the sacred chants that we share is very important. As you pronounce things correctly, the tongue touches the roof of the mouth in a Morse code sort of way, stimulating your glandular system, which in turn offers a very healing experience on the physical level.

**WD:** How much of your day includes yoga, chanting and rehearsing?

**SK:** I realized a long time ago when I experienced the light of my soul through



meditation, chanting, yoga and the Guru's Grace that I did not want to live one single day without this experience. As challenging as it is at times, I do a practice every day that includes Kundalini yoga, the recitation of my Banis from the Sikh tradition and chanting. I manage to get in at least an hour and half every day.

**WD:** How has practicing yoga contributed to your life?

**SK:** The practice of Kundalini yoga is a huge blessing in my life. I love it. Through this science of yoga, I have been able to remain relatively healthy, in balance and in a good peaceful state most of the time. Of course I am human so there are always times of challenges. That is when the yoga becomes really, really impor-



The sacred chant, or Gurbani Kirtan that our music carries forth into this world, is one of the most healing tools we have available to us on this planet.

tant. I am getting better at remembering to practice it during these times as well. As a teenager, the practice of Kundalini yoga challenged me and awakened the sense of spirit within that would carry me through challenging times. When I first got married to my husband, we were and still are practising meditations together that have elevated our communication together. When I was pregnant, I practised yoga sets that really helped my body and the delivery of my child. As a mother now, there are wonderful yoga sets and meditations I am able to practise with my daughter.

**WD:** Do you have any yoga recommendations? Some people are intimidated by yoga and don't think they are fit enough to partake. What would you suggest?

**SK:** I suggest to anyone who has the opportunity to take part in Kundalini Yoga classes. There is a wonderful centre in Kitsalano called Yoga West ([www.yogawest.ca](http://www.yogawest.ca)). There are classes for all levels taught by some of the best teachers in the world, I believe. Kundalini yoga has a physical aspect to it, but also a mental, emotional and spiritual healing experience is offered as well.

**WD:** How does Vancouver's Nirinjan Kaur contribute to your concert?

**SK:** Nirinjan Kaur will be joining us for our concert in Vancouver. I am so excited. She is one of my favourite Kirtan artists on the planet right now. We listen to her all the time at home. My three-year-old daughter calls her the "princess voice." I also totally love her live presence as well. In everything she does, she holds a sacred connection to God and Guru that just cannot be shaken. <

**Wendy DeMos** is a freelance writer specializing in stories about artists as well as life's creative and spiritual dimensions. She is also a singer/songwriter and children's performer.

## Upcoming events with Snatam Kaur

**October 26** Join Snatam Kaur with Todd Boston, Matthew Schoening, Ramesh Kannan and special guest Nirinjan Kaur for a night of kirtan and chanting, 7:30PM, Centennial Theatre, 2300 Lonsdale Ave., North Vancouver. Tickets at [centennialtheatre.com](http://centennialtheatre.com) (604-984-4484) or Banyen Books, 3608 West 4th Ave., Vancouver (604-732-7912) or at Yoga West, 2662 West 4th Ave., Vancouver (604-732-YOGA). Premium reserved \$57/\$69; regular reserved \$46/\$57; children 2-11 \$18/\$29.

**October 27** Awaken the Kundalini with Sacred Chant and Yoga Workshop with Snatam Kaur. 10AM-4:30PM, Van Dusen Botanical Gardens. Tickets at [yogawest.ca](http://yogawest.ca) and [spiritvoyage.com](http://spiritvoyage.com) or at Yoga West, 2662 West 4th Ave., Vancouver (604-732-YOGA).

**October 28** Snatam Kaur performs at the 3HO Annual Gala Fundraising Dinner, Crowne Plaza, Surrey, 5:30-9 PM. Tickets available at [yogawest.ca](http://yogawest.ca) and [spiritvoyage.com](http://spiritvoyage.com) or at Yoga West, 2662 West 4th Ave., Vancouver (604-732-YOGA).

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# What's the 'fracking' problem?

At least 38 earthquakes in northeastern BC over the past few years were caused by hydraulic fracturing (commonly called fracking), according to a report by the BC Oil and Gas Commission. Studies have found quakes are common in many places where natural gas extraction process is employed.

It's not unexpected that shooting massive amounts of water, sand and chemicals at high pressure into the earth to shatter shale and release natural gas might shake things up. But earthquakes aren't the worst problem with fracking. Hydraulic fracturing requires massive amounts of water. Disposing of the toxic wastewater, as well as accidental spills, can contaminate drinking water and harm human health. And pumping wastewater into the ground can further increase earthquake risk. Gas leakage also leads to problems, even causing tap water to become flammable. In some cases, flaming tap water is the result of methane leaks from fracking. And methane is a far more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

Those are all serious causes for concern, but even they don't pose the greatest threat from fracking. The biggest issue is that it's just one more way to continue our destructive addiction to fossil fuels. As easily accessible oil, gas and coal reserves become depleted, corporations have increasingly looked to "unconventional"

sources, such as those in the tar sands or under deep water or embedded in underground shale deposits.

And so we end up with catastrophes such as the spill – and deaths of 11 workers – from the Deepwater Horizon blowout in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010. We turn a blind eye to the massive environmental devastation of the tar sands. We blast the tops off of mountains to get coal. We figure depleted water supplies, a few earthquakes and poisoned water is the price we have to pay

**In some cases, flaming tap water is the result of methane leaks from fracking.**


**And methane is a far more potent greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.**

to maintain our fossil-fuelled way of life.

Some people, mostly from the fossil fuel industry, have argued that natural gas could be a "bridging" fuel while we work on expanding renewable energy development and capacity, by providing a source of energy with fewer greenhouse gas emissions when burned than coal and oil. But numerous studies, including one by the

David Suzuki Foundation and the Pembina Institute, have found this theory to be extremely problematic. To begin, leaks of natural gas – itself a powerful greenhouse gas – and the methane that is often buried with it, contribute to global warming. Burning natural gas and the industrial activity required to extract and transport it also contribute to increased greenhouse gas emissions. As McKibben notes, the U.S. National Center for Atmospheric Research concluded that switching to natural gas "would do little to help solve the climate problem." More than anything, continued and increasing investment in natural gas extraction and infrastructure will slow investment in, and transition to, renewable energy.

If we put all our energy and resources into continued fossil fuel extraction, we will have lost an opportunity to invest in renewable energy.

If we want to address global warming, along with the other environmental problems associated with our continued rush to burn our precious fossil fuels as quickly as possible, we must learn to use our resources more wisely, kick our addiction and quickly start turning to sources of energy that have fewer negative impacts. 

Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation Communications Manager **Ian Hanington**. Learn more at [www.davidsuzuki.org](http://www.davidsuzuki.org)

... *Trophy* from p.32



Across from Itsa in a place called Kwatna where many bears are killed each year, a string of about 60 prayer flags signed by people from Vancouver now flies in the trees in the hope it will influence a coming time of peace and justice in the Great Bear Rainforest and an end to the bear hunt.

BC Coastal Bear and Wolf Patrol, with the authorization of the Hereditary Nuxalk Chiefs, is now looking to enforce the 10-nation ban by bringing in volunteers willing to act as 'Great Bear Sentinels.' Teams of three

to four people would camp out for a two-week shift in river estuaries where bears are routinely killed, taking photos and making videos of what is happening. They would then transmit them to Kiff and Jason at BC Coastal Bear and Wolf Patrol who would respond appropriately. According to Kiff and Jason, hunters will often not shoot if they know they are being photographed, for fear of accidentally killing a female with cubs or yearlings, which is illegal.

The presence of volunteers would literally save many bears, including pregnant females and their offspring, from being needlessly killed. BC Coastal Bear and Wolf Patrol will train and transport people to the river estuaries and pick them up once the shift is done. People are asked to donate the fuel costs (about

\$300-\$500 per trip) as well as their time and equipment and to pay for their own food and transportation. This writer is seriously considering leading by example and doing a shift in mid-October. Who's with me, for the bear and the memory of Qwatsinas? Contact Kiff Archer at 250-982-2274 or Jason Moody at 250-267-5384 or write them at [kiffarcher11@gmail.com](mailto:kiffarcher11@gmail.com) or [jasonm.nan@gmail.com](mailto:jasonm.nan@gmail.com)

Please give generously to Pacific Wild so the organization can continue its crucial work to stop the trophy

hunt and help the whole world fall in love with the Great Bear Rainforest, its beautiful bears, countless creatures and ancient complex cultures. Pick up a copy of the incredible book *The Salmon Bears* (lead photo in this article) by Ian McAllister and Nicholas Read (Orca Book Publishers [www.orcabook.com](http://www.orcabook.com))

## Take action today

Write a handwritten letter to Premier Christy Clark, Minister of Environment Terry Lake and your local MLA or email her at [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca) or call 250-387-1715 and tell them what you think of the trophy hunt. Ask your friends and family to do the same. Consider cc'ing your letter to the media. Contact lists and a letter template with addresses can be found at [www.pacificwild.org](http://www.pacificwild.org)

Sign the petition at [www.gopetition.com/petitions/trophyhunt/sign.html](http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/trophyhunt/sign.html)

**Adam Siddhartha Sealey**, wildlife lover native to BC's coast, has been following the Great Bear Rainforest story for two decades. He recently returned from an eye-opening journey to Bella Coola, in the heart of the Great Bear Rainforest, with Thilo 'Many Bears' Mehrhoff and Tim 'The Mighty One' Steinruck from the band 'B.E.A.R.' The band was touring with its new album of the same name to remind us about our deep connection to the bear. Music at [www.facebook.com/bearclanmusic](http://www.facebook.com/bearclanmusic) Amrita Singh acted as cook and James Scott photographed the journey. For more photos and videos, please read the extended article at [www.commonground.ca](http://www.commonground.ca)



# Eight reasons to stop the Peace River Dam



The proposed location for the Site C Dam. Photo by Don Hoffmann

Over the last four decades, Site C, the giant hydroelectric dam that BC Hydro plans to build on the Peace River in northern BC, has been rejected by both the BC Utilities Commission and the BC government. Having been seen as too risky and too costly, it is now back on the table. At present, there are already two massive hydroelectric dams on that river. Our politicians in Victoria, after forcing the (independent) BC Utilities Commission to step aside, are now determined to build this dam in order to supply electricity for the planned natural gas liquefaction plants in Kitimat. In addition, Site C would supply the electricity to power the pumps of the Northern Gateway bitumen pipeline. The natural gas and the bitumen would then be exported to Asia. Below, I have provided eight reasons why the Site C dam is destined to be an ecological disaster and a colossal waste of money.

1) Site C is a white elephant, a project that would produce power at a cost much greater than the power can be sold for. If built, it would push BC Hydro one step closer to bankruptcy. Here's why: According to BC Hydro estimates, Site C would cost \$8 billion and would take 10 years to construct. Under optimum conditions, it is rated at 1,100 megawatts or 1,100,000 kilowatts. On average, year-round, it might run at 80% capacity and produce 880,000 kilowatts. To obtain the kilowatt-hours produced per year, we multiply 880,000kw by 24 hours, by 365 days and we get 7,708,800,000-kilowatt hours. A few big industrial customers would use all of this power: The liquefaction of natural gas plant in Kitimat (LNG), Enbridge's Northern Gateway pipeline and a few mines. At present, large-scale industrial customers pay 3.671 cents per kwh so the total income Site C would produce per year would be 7,708,800,000 kwh multiplied by 3.671 cents – an annual operating income of \$282,990,800.

This yearly income of \$282,990,800 is not nearly enough to cover the yearly operating expenses. To begin

year and pay interest on that so the interest bill accumulated during the 10-year construction period would be \$1.65 billion. The total cost of the project would be \$11.65 billion – \$10 billion construction cost and \$1.65 billion accumulated interest. Borrowing all this money at 3%, Hydro would be stuck with a yearly interest bill of \$349.5 million. Interest, of course, is not the only yearly expense. The dam's projected life expectancy is 100 years so it needs to be written off during that time period. That adds another \$100 million to the yearly expenses so now we have \$449,500,000. With wages, taxes, maintenance, etc., totalling maybe \$5.5 million, we get yearly operating expenses of \$455,000,000. Comparing the yearly operating income of \$282,990,800 with the yearly operating cost of \$455,000,000, we see a yearly loss of \$166,509,200.

The above analysis is based on a very favourable low interest rate of 3%. Should interest rates rise during the next few years, as many observers believe they will, Hydro's yearly loss would increase dramatically. At a rate of 4%, Hydro's yearly operating expenses would be \$571,500,000 and its yearly loss would be \$288,509,200. What's more, Hydro has very little scope to increase the rate of 3.671 cents per kwh that big industrial customers are paying now. If that rate goes up, these customers would generate their own electricity using natural gas. The capital cost of a natural gas facility, producing about the same amount of electricity as Site C, would cost only about \$1.5 billion so these facilities would not be saddled with the huge interest burden of Site C.

2) The steep banks of the Peace River are highly unstable so landslides and a great deal of sloughing would occur, reducing the volume of water held by the reservoir. The huge silting problem would reduce the capacity to produce power, making it even more difficult to generate the money to service the billions of dollars of debt.

3) Over 13,000 acres of prime agricultural land would be lost, as 107 kilometres of the Peace, Halfway and

with, the \$8 billion price tag is probably on the optimistic side. It does not take into account the new transmission line to Kitimat that would have to be built, the fertile farms that would have to be expropriated and the large sections of the highway from Fort St. John to Hudson's Hope that would have to be relocated. In addition, typically, there are cost overruns so a price tag of \$10 billion is probably more realistic. Hydro would have to borrow all this money by selling BC Hydro bonds, presumably paying an interest rate of about 3%. During the construction phase, Hydro would have to borrow about \$1 billion each

Moberly rivers would be flooded. This area, during the growing season, could produce enough food for all of northern BC. The Peace River flats have their own microclimate so even melons can be produced there. As well, 12,000 acres of boreal forest (an effective carbon sink) would be lost.


4) The carbon footprint of Site C is enormous. Three and a half billion cubic meters of concrete will have to be poured and one and a half million cubic meters of wood will have to be burned, not to mention the use of heavy equipment for 10 years.

5) The new reservoir would cut the Yellowstone to Yukon Wildlife Corridor in half at its narrowest and most vulnerable point. Many large animals require these lands for sufficient habitat. Wetlands that support migratory flocks would be gone. The habitat of several red and blue-listed species would be destroyed, including fisher and Northern Myotis bats.

6) The majority of First Nations in northeastern BC are adamantly opposed to the dam. In an area already overburdened with oil and gas developments, destroying the last relatively untouched areas in BC's Peace River Valley is the last straw for First Nations and other residents. The communities of northern BC have borne the brunt of industrial development in the province for decades. People are still feeling the impact of the first two dams that flooded people out of house and home.

7) The Peace River Valley is an area of stunning natural beauty. Destroying this valley to build a money-losing power dam to export bitumen and LNG to Asia, which, in turn, will dump more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, seems like utter madness.

8) If Site C was built and its power used for export-based LNG plants and bitumen pipelines, the Canadian dollar would rise substantially above parity, sending even more shoppers south of the border. The Canadian Retail Council has called this a \$20 billion dollar hole. That hole would become much bigger – \$30 or \$40 billion dollars per year. The jobs lost in Canadian retailing and manufacturing would far outweigh the few short-term construction jobs created by the carbon pipelines and Site C.

So why, given all these drawbacks, is Site C even on the agenda? It seems there are powerful groups in North America who would love to see BC Hydro drift into insolvency. These groups applauded Victoria's policy of forcing BC Hydro to buy power from independent power producers at prices far exceeding the prices this power can be sold for. Should BC Hydro become insolvent, it would be a golden opportunity to privatize it and for powerful vested interest groups to pick up some of the best hydro electric facilities on the continent at bargain basement prices. 

**Reimar Kroecher** taught economics at Langara College for 30 years. For more information about supporting the protest against Site C, visit the Keep the Peace Blog at <https://keep-thethepeace.wordpress.com/> and the Peace Valley Environment Association at [www.peacevalley.ca](http://www.peacevalley.ca)



... *Money changer's* from p.5

where some of the short-term fixes have been tested and exhausted, and deeper questions are being asked.”

Third year? Short term fixes? Tested and exhausted? In blunt language, what this means is that after three years and trillions spent, their quick (short term) fixes did no more than temporarily bail out banks that had made bad bets and fallen deeply in debt, while driving a number of European nations into depression.

### The Banksters

The Libor scandal should have been the story of the century. The magnitude and import of the crime, and its incommensurately paltry punishment, should have been headline news. Thus, only a small percentage of the public knew about it and understood what was really going on. As for the rest of the population, even if Libor made it into “their” news, they wouldn’t know a Libor if they got hit over the head by one. (LIBOR is the London Inter-bank Offered Rate is the average interest rate estimated by leading banks in London that they would be charged if borrowing from other banks)

While public outrage at flagrant banking criminality was building throughout much of the world, what was not being recognized was that, in fact, banks controlled the world. This wasn’t a paranoid, Illuminati-style conspiracy theory. It was a Central Bank coup: “Democratic” governments had been taken over by the banks. The banks weren’t colluding with the government. They *were* the government. They *were* one and the same.

Billions of lives and livelihoods were affected by the interest-rate rigging scheme, which was but the most recent in a long series of high crimes and misdemeanors committed by the financial crime syndicate. The banks were literally sapping the life out of the people.

Yet, in the Summer of 2012, even with the wave of high-profile bank bailouts and bank frauds making the news, you still could not read about what it signified.

Sovereign debt crisis – Spain, Greece, Italy, Bankia, euro bonds, Libor – there was just too much going on for most people to understand what it meant for them. Both the specialized financial language used and the labyrinthine and Machiavellian business practices described

were profession-specific and beyond the comprehension of those unschooled in it.

It was not that it was in any sense a secret. It had been divulged almost 200 years ago by Mayer Amschel Bauer Rothschild:

*“The few who can understand the system will be either so interested in its profits, or so dependent on its favours, that there will be no opposition from that class, while, on the other hand, that great body of people, mentally incapable of comprehending the tremendous advantage that Capital derives from the system, will bear its burden without complaint and, perhaps, without even suspecting that the system is inimical to their interests.”*

And that’s precisely how the “system” has been operating ever since.

By 2012, the takeover was complete. Rothschild’s 1838 bankers’ manifesto had been realized: *“Let me issue and control a Nation’s money and I care not who makes its laws.”*

The people had become vassals to the bankers. But they liked to call it “freedom and democracy.”

Since the “Panic of ’08,” among the countries directly affected (with the exception of Iceland, who let the banks fail) priority number one has been to save the banks at any cost – even though it was universally recognized that the banks and Wall Street were, in large part, responsible for creating the Panic. This was the precise opposite of the government’s reaction to the Crash of ’29, when banks and brokerages responsible for building the speculative bubbles were recognized for what they were and reined in and regulated accordingly.

Not only did the rich rule, they ruled by divine right (e.g., Goldman Sachs CEO Lloyd Blankfein’s famous assertion, “We’re doing God’s work”).

Regardless of their “mis-steps,” regardless of their gross failures, regardless of the widespread effects of their failures, the people calling the shots never accept responsibility for their actions. At most they express regrets and leave it to the general public to pay for their mistakes. For all the talk about reducing debt and fostering responsible economic policy, the real purpose behind the austerity measures was to wring every cent they could out of the public in order to save the banks from the consequences of their bad bets and make good their losses.



In the case of Greece, for example, this is how it worked: The citizens of the Eurozone were taxed to pay off the bad bets made by banks and to pay off debts incurred by the Greek government. Their tax money went directly to the “troika” (European Commission, European Central Bank, International Monetary Fund.) The troika would then send the funds to Greece in return for Greek bonds that nobody else would buy and that the Greek government could not service.

The Greek government took its cut of the tax money and sent the balance back to the troika. Thus, the troika loaned money to the government, most of which then went back to the troika in the form of interest payments on the bonds. In this way, 75 percent of Greece’s \$230 billion debt was effectively appropri-



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ated by the troika. The long and short of it was that the troika enriched itself at the taxpayers' expense and to the peril of the economy. The harsher the payment terms, the higher taxes had to be and the greater the cuts to services and benefits. The bigger the cuts, the deeper the depression. How could it be otherwise?

By June, official Greek unemployment hit 22 percent. In other words, the bankers and assorted financiers got practically all the money, the euro-public got taxed and received nothing in return and the Greek people were reduced to penury.

### What's in a name?

Rather than seriously address, or even acknowledge, these revolutions in the making, the news media's standard response was to apply a pejorative label, whether or not the label fit. Any party making inroads into or unseating the ruling parties' power was linguistically marginalized, demonized, or oversimplified as "populist," "separatist," "extremist," "radical," "anti-establishment," etc.

Perhaps it was inevitable that news organizations would view anyone or anything that stepped beyond conventional wisdom as being on the "fringe," since the media have positioned themselves as centrist ("Fair and balanced," "All the News That's Fit to Print," "The Most Trusted Name in News"). Incestuously tied to the ruling parties, the media have become part of what all those populists, separatists, extremists, radicals and anti-establishmentarians were bent upon disempowering.

Yet, the simplistic language meant to diminish these diverse, complex political movements inadvertently described what would link them: class warfare.

### The Great Book of Lies

Bankia was formed by the Spanish government in 2010 through a merger of 7 insolvent banks that had bet heavily and lost when Spain's property market bubble blew up. In the Spring of 2011, Bankia prepared a €4 billion public offering, but the IPO fell flat with global institutional investors who were unwilling to put money into it because of its risky real estate exposure.

With the smart money out of the game, the Bankia bandits and the government wise guys targeted easier marks, launching a massive and successful public relations/propaganda campaign that exhorted Spanish citizens to buy shares of Bankia as a patriotic duty to help revive the sinking economy.

It was a con game, a ruthless, money-junkie ploy. It began with a lie and ended with a lie. Initially, shares were touted as a safe investment for the risk-averse. Bankia announced a €300 million profit for 2011, only to subsequently "re-adjust" those results as a €3 billion loss! Big international investors cashed out early, while the little people went down with the near-worthless stock.

The IMF applauded, asserting the bailout was big enough to restore credibility to Spanish banks. Christine Lagarde, IMF managing director, echoed the enthusiasm: the plan provided "assurance that the financing needs of Spain's banking system will be fully met." And in America, Treasury Secretary and financial Pom-Pom Boy-in-Chief, Timothy Geithner, called the plan "important for the health of Spain's economy and as concrete steps on the path to financial union, which is vital to the resilience of the euro area."

Investors, unmoved by the cheerleading, saw it as a good deal only for banks and their shareholders, but a burden for the government that would take on more debt and the taxpayers who would be responsible for paying it off. The Spanish daily, *El Mundo* noted that the €1.8 billion per year interest payments on the loan would "oblige the government to tighten the austerity thumbscrew even further ... One thing is for sure: no one lends €100 billion without demanding anything in return."

Days later, the yield on Spain's 10-year bonds, an indicator of the risk of holding that debt, rose to 6.96 percent, the highest since the euro was introduced in 1999 – just a hair below the 7 percent that the financial world regards as the interest rate of no return, beyond which there is no possibility of ever servicing the debt.

The complex machinery of state – government, financial sector, media – had been set in lock-step motion, devoted to nothing other than rescuing the banks. There was no need to justify the action. The banks were


sacred, holy, sacrosanct, indispensable to the life of the planet. It was as self-evident as the fact that "all people are created equal" ... especially if they were bankers and investors and therefore, like George Orwell's pigs in *Animal Farm*, more equal than others.

### The Only Change You Can Believe In

For anything significant to change, people must stop playing "follow the leader." But, if people stop following the leader, then who will lead them? The answer: No one! You must lead yourself.

But self-leadership cannot be bought, given, or imposed. It has to come from within. It begins with expecting nothing from your "leaders" and understanding that everything has to come from you. It means having the courage not to cower to power. The dignity to claim your rightful and sacred place on earth. To respect yourself, demand it of others and show respect to all who merit it ... regardless of class or status. The integrity to keep and live by your word. And the passion to live a life of meaning and conviction; for your heart to feel what your mind knows.

This is not an "every man for himself," manifesto. Rather it is a call for a cooperative of individuals with the courage, dignity, respect, integrity and passion to chart a future that is not dictated and imposed upon them by ruling political parties and the unprincipled and oppressive systems they represent. There is no "We the People" until "I the Person" is willing to stand up and speak for himself or herself.

For the future to change, the individual must change. When enough individuals change, everything changes. 

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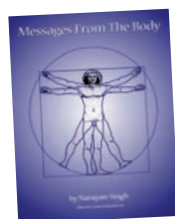


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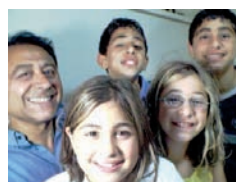
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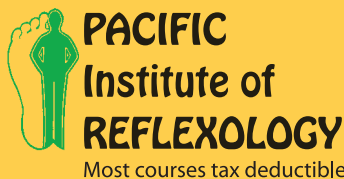
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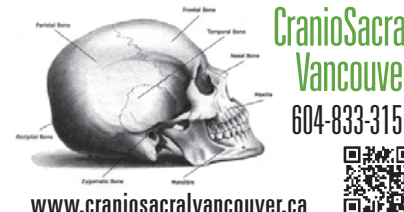
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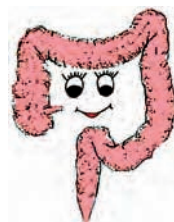


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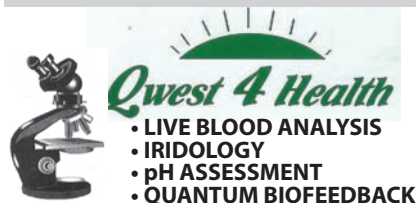
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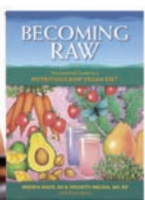
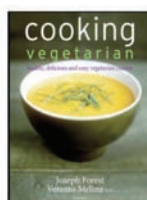
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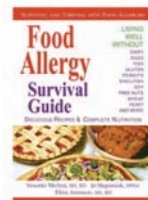
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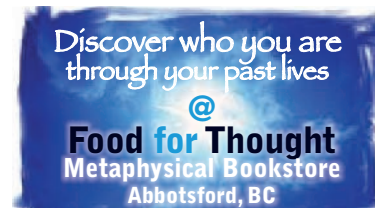
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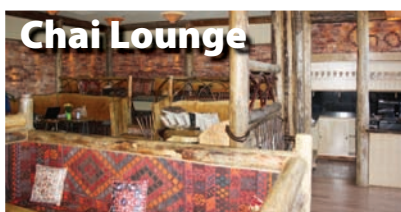
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- **Souls on Fire!** series continues through October
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See Calendar and Classes website pages for info

**SUNDAY MEDITATION:** 10:15 am  
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*The only thing worth globalizing is dissent.*  
- Arundhati Roy



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Darwinian windup toys would have disintegrated back into the prebiotic soup they came from. Instead, a fraction of them joined up in multicellular Rotary Clubs because of the mutual benefits for all. If the only direction for normal was south, there would be predation and parasitism, but no symbiosis. Cutthroat competition would have trumped cooperation.

“In general, life is better than it has even been,” the writer P. J. O’Rourke insisted back in the nineties. “Even the bad things are better than they used to be. Consider this: How would you like to visit King Arthur’s dentist?” In a time when surgeons and barbers were one and the same, there was no anaesthetic or antiseptic to speak of. Need your gangrened foot to come off? “Here, drink this and bite on that while we saw it off. Off you go, then; when the stump stops bleeding, we’ll stick leeches on it and sacrifice a goat. Have a nice day.”

That was the old, bad normal. And no one knows for certain if there ever was a better normal in prior ages. In the summer of 1996, two teenagers were walking along the shores of the Columbia River in Washington state when one of them came across what he thought was a large, smooth, round rock. Deciding to spook his friend, he yelled out that he had just found a human head in the shallow water. When he picked up the “stone,” he discovered it had teeth.

The 9,300-year-old Kennewick Man didn’t have an easy life, according to archaeologists. In addition to a spear point in his hip, he had a chipped shoulder socket, six fractured ribs and a healed radial head fracture. When researchers reconstructed his facial features by applying clay musculature to a cast of the skull, they discovered that several muscles were overdeveloped, associated with a grimacing expression. It appeared the ancient Caucasian was often in acute discomfort. As one of the researchers remarked, “This guy cried a lot.”

Archaeological remains from Europe shows evidence of Palaeolithic hunter-gatherers who looked elderly in their twenties, weakened by battle injuries and/or a range of opportunistic infections. At the very least, we know normal didn’t get worse across the board for all our ancestors because we’re alive to speculate about them. Neither internecine conflict nor the last Ice Age was capable of snuffing out their species-specific candle. (Disaster has a way of making humans think. The explosive evolutionary growth of the human cortex has been connected to the range of time when the western hemisphere was buried under glaciers hundreds of feet thick.)

This brings me to the touchy topic of climate science. Former NASA scientist James Hansen insists the Alberta Tar Sands “carbon bomb” means “game over for the planet.” Yet Andrew Weaver, University of Victoria climatologist and a lead author with the International Panel on Climate Change, disagrees. He insists carbon emissions from the Tar Sands will be negligible on the global climate. NASA scientist James Lovelock, another major thinker on the global warming front, has recently recanted his previous views on anthropogenic (man-made) global warming, saying his previous claims of planetary heat death were “too alarmist.”

Who’s right? Three of the biggest silverbacks in climate science cannot come to agreement on major predictions within their own field. I don’t disbelieve in global

warming, but I choose to worry more about the Tar Sands for its toxic tailing ponds and moonscape legacy than its carbon emissions. I’m concerned more with overfishing and species decline than the IPCC’s changing estimates of sea level rising, just as I worry more about the literal fallout from the crippled Fukushima reactors and other aging reactors around the world (to say nothing of launch-ready nuclear weapons) than the emissions from motor vehicles in India and China.

Perhaps we’re cooked, either literally or metaphorically. Yet if civilization can survive the next 20 years, the exponential growth of solar power technology makes it very likely that renewable energy based on the ultimate free lunch – the Sun – will overtake King CONG (coal, oil, nuclear and gas), with huge reductions in global carbon emissions.

Ah, civilization: on one side, it’s cluster bombs, nuclear weapons and predator drones. Bad normal. On the other, its antibiotics, sanitation and solar power. Good normal. And all the ambiguous new normals in between, like plastics and hi-definition television. The terrible irony is that technology has always been the handmaiden of war. Like it or not, we owe some of our ‘advances’ in domestic living to the spin-offs of the nation-state sport of defence/offense. To give just two examples, the Internet was birthed in a Pentagon nursery for nuke-proof communications tech, and solar panels were first employed on US spy satellites.

Yet sometimes I muse that the merging of social networking, facial recognition software, CCTV cameras, GPS pinpointing, data mining and artificial intelligence signals the beginning of our surrender to the machines. (Skynet, anyone?) And occasionally I ponder the precise opposite possibility. “We stand on the verge of one of the bleakest periods in human history, when the bright lights of civilization blink out, and we will descend for decades, if not centuries, into barbarity,” said *New York Times* journalist Chris Hedges in a recent interview with PBS magus Bill Moyers. He sees harbingers in what he calls “capitalism’s sacrifice zones,” spread throughout the US like open wounds. Credit-strapped towns like Camden, New Jersey and Stockton, California, have been left to face bankruptcy and terminal decline after the cross-country fallout from Wall Street’s vulture capitalism.

*Fashionable fascism dominates the scene  
When ends don’t meet it’s easier to justify the means  
Tenants get the dregs and landlords get the cream  
As the grinding devolution of the democratic dream  
Brings us men in gas masks dancing while the shells burst  
The trouble with normal is it always gets worse.*

At the risk of sounding glib, let’s say for a moment you or I had a time machine, an impacted molar and a choice. The first choice is to remain in the present, where you live in a 300-square-foot apartment in a city festooned with surveillance cameras. In choice number two, you live in a thatched hut on a feudal state in Medieval England at Christmas time. I know how I’d choose, though I might take a few microseconds longer if the first option was a corrugated steel shack in present-day Mumbai or Lagos. And that’s the terrible divide in a

nutshell. A world of such great technical sophistication as ours, with billions still living in abject poverty, is an obscenity. And to qualify my earlier comments about slavery, an estimated 26 million men, women, and children around the world remain enslaved through prostitution, manual labour or enforced military service. “Normal” remains overwhelmingly bleak for these people.

Considering civilization survived the wars of the twentieth century, it would be defeatist to say normal always gets worse. But considering 160 million people *did not* survive the wars of the twentieth century, it would be delusional to say normal always gets better. Personally, I try not to allow every single negative trend to negate my fragile appreciation for the positive trends, which are often recognized only in retrospect. Emergent novelty is usually only seen in the rear view mirror.


I have no desire to be a Cassandra, yelling ‘were heading for the cliff with the brake-lines cut.’ But I don’t want to come across like a Pollyanna saying, ‘relax, we’ve got Sirius Radio and bucket seats.’ The biggest problem with the “trouble with normal is it always gets worse,” as a



Normal doesn’t always get worse  
and it doesn’t always get better.  
More often than not, normal gets  
weirder. That’s not a principle  
I prefer to live by, although it’s  
an idea I think I can live with.

principle, rather than a song, is that it sounds like a counsel of despair and inaction. It’s a way to respond with a shrug and a sigh to corruption, contamination and collapse. In the words of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, “It is an act of evil to accept the state of evil as either inevitable or final.”

In conclusion, I would amend my friend’s Cockburn-derived dictum. Normal doesn’t always get worse and it doesn’t always get better. More often than not, *normal gets weirder*. That’s not a principle I prefer to live by, although it’s an idea I think I can live with. It certainly doesn’t mean we live “in the best of all possible worlds,” as Voltaire’s Dr. Pangloss insisted. And it doesn’t mean we shouldn’t make some efforts to make our community, and our world, a better place, because... well, just look around. This place could use some serious work. Cockburn himself agrees. Once asked about the lyrics to *The Trouble With Normal*, the singer-songwriter replied, “If you don’t tackle the problems, they’re gonna get worse.”

I remain an optimistic pessimist; hence this unconvincing, print-based contortionist act. I will continue to rant along with my lunch companions, but I still count my blessings, brief and culture-bound as they may be. 

www.geoffolson.com



# The *fog* of money



with eleven. Everybody is happy, including the debtor, as long as your 10 cows are able to produce a surplus – to pay the lender back the interest and be a little ahead of the game himself. The problem arises when a disease wipes out his cows one year. Now he's lost his livelihood and he owes the lender. You guessed it. He becomes a slave to the lender. The Bible calls this usury. It's a big sin. The people of the covenant instituted the year of the Jubilee, the year of the release, when all debts were forgiven. (That line in the Lord's Prayer, by the way, was grounded in economics). I'm sure many Greeks are praying it with fervour.

Usury, and the subsequent expropriation of land, is the backdrop to the gospel and Jesus' ministry. The Roman Empire required a massive transfer of wealth from the conquered to the victors. After they occupied Israel, Rome implemented a burdensome tax on just about everything. When landowners defaulted because they couldn't pay their taxes, the lands were expropriated and ancestral lands were thus transferred to Rome. What got Jesus crucified was his symbolic act of casting out the moneychangers. Any country prophet could walk into the Temple and rail against the system, but Jesus *acted*. When he overturned the tables and confronted the moneychangers, he was actually symbolically overturning the entire money system, the usury, the taxation system and the priesthood's collusion with Rome. From Antonio's tower, in the corner of the Temple grounds, the sentry saw the commotion. Jesus' fate was sealed.

The debt economy is still with us. Those who own the money lend it out with interest. And as we've seen, with the mortgage-backed security debacle, those who control the money (the 1% in Occupy lingo) are not allowed to fail. Our money system assumes a model of unlimited growth. The exchange of goods and services (GDP) needs to keep expanding in order to service the debt. Our system also assumes a condition of unlimited consumer need. The system is under pressure to create perpetually growing demand. We need bigger, better and more. And if we ever awaken from the money trance and decide that this is poppycock, (which it is), it's going to throw the whole system into freefall. I'm into 12 years with my car. We keep it serviced and drive very little; these Honda engines can go half a million kilometres. But in so doing, I'm acting as the enemy of the state. I'm its worse nightmare.

Acting in the best interests of the economic system is acting against the best interests of Earth and, ultimately, the only real economy is the one that Earth provides. The only true capital is natural capital. Money is an abstraction. But, somehow, we've convinced ourselves that it's the only real thing, the secret to happiness and freedom. The fog of money. How do you reconcile an assumption of unlimited growth with the reality of limited resources? You can't. These two realities are bound to collide. We're on a crash course.

One strategy is to monetize what we once believed

was un-monetizable (you won't find that word in Webster's). We've all seen those Master Card commercials that show Dad getting up at five AM for his son's hockey practice with the tag line, "A father and son sharing a Saturday morning at the hockey rink, priceless. For everything else, there is Master Card." They give the impression the good credit card folks know there truly are some things that money just can't buy. But it's a ruse, me thinks. If you told me 20 years ago that we'd monetize drinking water by putting it in a plastic bottle and that it would cost more than gasoline, I would have thought you daffy. But that's the thing with our money system. There is unrelenting pressure to monetize things we once thought money truly couldn't buy. Like a blanket on a cold aircraft. For five bucks, you can now purchase human decency. I'm waiting for the day when we'll have the option of paying a little more for a friendly flight attendant who smiles occasionally vs. the nasty economy rate flight attendant.



What got Jesus crucified was his symbolic act of casting out the moneychangers. Any country prophet could walk into the Temple and rail against the system, but Jesus *acted*.

I recently watched a futuristic film in which human beings were implanted with a chip that killed them at the age of 25. But, you guessed it, you could buy extra years. Time is money, as the saying goes – just another "goods and service." Time, the last remaining gift, had become monetized, presumably because in the futuristic setting of the film, we had run out of natural capital (water, earth, air) to convert into money. The rich achieved immortality while the poor waited to die young on the other side of the guarded fences.

Eisenstein is no revolutionary or anarchist. In fact, he's an evolutionary. The current debt crisis is an evolutionary provocation to introduce more natural intelligence into our money system. I'm not an economist so I cannot comment on how realistic his solutions are, but I'm encouraged people like him are helping to clear away the fog of money. Jesus would approve. ◀

**Bruce Sanguin** is an author of five books and a minister at Canadian Memorial United Church in Vancouver. He is struggling to pay off his mortgage. [www.brucesanguin.com](http://www.brucesanguin.com)

Is anybody else confused by the mixed messages we get from our financial gurus? Messages like we should buy more in order to keep the economic engine humming. Ok, but isn't overconsumption killing our planet? One day, I hear we're in debt up to our eyeballs as consumers and Bank of Canada Governor Mark Carney wants to implement policy to rein in spending. We need to save and pay down our debts. But then we hear that too much saving will trigger a recession. The fed moves interests rates up and down to incentivize spending or saving and like trained animals we oblige. Who can figure it out? It all seems a bit crazy to me.

While reading Charles Eisenstein's book *Sacred Economics*, I realized I had not achieved an objective relationship with our money system. I don't have money. It has me. Like a fish that doesn't know the milieu it is swimming in, I just swim merrily along. Eisenstein tells us it doesn't have to be this way – that we can make up another money system if we determine this one isn't working. And let's face it; it's not working.

Modernity and its money system has us in its spell. We have forgotten that it's all a gift: air, water, land, animals, plants and Earth itself; all of these belong to the commons. They don't belong to anybody. It would seem to follow we would naturally want to re-gift as a response to the abundant gifts of our beloved Earth. Not so much. Some smart guy at some point, (likely, at gun point) declared that this piece of land and all of its fruits belonged to him. But he would be willing to lease a piece of it back to you at 10% interest. Enter the interest (or debt) economy. I'll give you 10 cows, if you pay me back





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# Events/Datebook

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**ALL MONTH TO OCT 24**

**Andean Wisdom Teachings** with Jhaimy Alvarez-Acosta from Cusco, Peru. Workshops, retreats, talks & personal healings: Vancouver & Victoria. [www.childrenofthe7rays.com](http://www.childrenofthe7rays.com) 778-279-7234.

**OCT 12**

**Free Talk & Open House** hosted by the Institute of Shamanic Medicine. 7pm, Vancouver. For info email [info@shamanicmedicine.ca](mailto:info@shamanicmedicine.ca) or call 778-227-2939. [www.shamanicmedicine.ca](http://www.shamanicmedicine.ca)

**OCT 13**

**Past Life Exploration Talk & Workshop** 1-5PM: Experience a journey into YOUR PAST to heal your PRESENT. West Vancouver, \$75. [www.lifebetweenlives.ca/Events](http://www.lifebetweenlives.ca/Events) 1-888-606-8463

**OCT 13**

**Psychic & Wellness Fair Dance Addicts**, 4622 Hastings St., Burnaby. Psychics, Healers & Spa Treatments. Info @ [www.tandtvancouver.com](http://www.tandtvancouver.com)

**OCT 13**

**The SEED Event**: 10AM-10PM, PNE. Join us for an unforgettable day of Internationally Renown Speakers Deepak Chopra, Adam McLeod (Dreamhealer), Gerald Celente, David Wolfe, Karen McGregor, Jeffrey Armstrong & special guests. Visit the exclusive Tradeshow, Marketplace & Cafe. Education. Experience. Enlightenment... for everyone. Forum [www.seedevent.org](http://www.seedevent.org)

**OCT 14**

**J.Krishnamurti in Beyond Myth and Tradition** series with Evelyn Blau: The Sacred. Free DVD showing, dialogue, refreshments. Vancouver Public Library downtown, 7th Floor, Board Breakout Room, 1:45PM. Look us up on and register at [meetup.com](http://meetup.com) [krishnamurtigroup@live.com](http://krishnamurtigroup@live.com) 604-354-1534.

**OCT 17**

**Free Talk on Transcendental Meditation** and Live demonstration of Brainwave coherence. 2PM and 7PM at the Century Plaza Hotel, 1015 Burrard Street. [www.tm.org](http://www.tm.org), [www.itranscend.ca](http://www.itranscend.ca) RSVP, 778-996-9025.

**OCT 19**

**Shimshai in Vancouver**: 7-11PM. Ancient Sanskrit mantras of India & traditional folk songs of South America. Tickets \$30 + HST at [www.ConsciousLivingRadio.org/page141.htm](http://www.ConsciousLivingRadio.org/page141.htm)

**OCT 20**

**Enlightened Living Free Class**: REDUCING STRESS THRU MEDITATION, 7PM. Meditation & Ecology Centre, 11011 Shell Road, Richmond. Also in Vancouver TBA. To register: Linda, 604-985-5840.

**OCT 23-25**

**Gregory Bateson and the Rhizome Century Conference**: Building sustainable webs, an interdisciplinary conference. Presentations, discussions & networking. Performance Works, Granville Island. Tx/Info: [www.therhizomecentury.com](http://www.therhizomecentury.com)

**OCT 26-27**

**Making Waves: Sinking the Harper Agenda**

Public Forum and Conference, Nanaimo; with Maude Barlow, Linda McQuaig and Bill McKibben. By donation. [www.canadians.org/conference](http://www.canadians.org/conference)

**OCT 26-28**

**Introduction to Ear Reflexology** commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7:30PM, \$10; Course \$395. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818 [www.pacificreflexology.com](http://www.pacificreflexology.com)

**OCT 26, 27, 28**

**Snatam Kaur in Vancouver**: Oct 26 - Concert. Oct 27 - Workshop "Awaken the Kundalini." Oct 28 - 3H0 Annual Fundraiser Gala Dinner. Events info: [www.yogawest.ca](http://www.yogawest.ca) Also see display ad this issue.

**OCT 26-29**

**Mandala Arts and Culture** presents GAIT TO THE SPIRIT 2012: The 3rd annual festival celebrating classical dance of India: bharata natyam - odissi - kathak. All events at Scotiabank Dance Centre. Tickets on sale at Banyen books & sound. More info: [WWW.MANDALARTS.CA](http://WWW.MANDALARTS.CA) - 604-874-8985.

**OCT 26-29**

**Spirit Plant Medicine Conference 2012** at UBC. Indigenous Leaders, Ethnobotanists, Shamans & Medical Researchers. Tickets from \$144 (+ HST, food included) at [www.SpiritPlantMedicine.com](http://www.SpiritPlantMedicine.com)

**OCT 28**

**The Dawning of a New Civilization**: As we move into the Age of Aquarius, a great shift in consciousness is taking place. The elder brothers of humanity are here at our request to assist us out of the collapse of the old order into an era of Brotherhood, where sharing the resources of the world will lead to justice and peace. INVESTIGATE FOR YOURSELF. Free presentation: 2PM, Roundhouse Community Centre. [www.share-international.org](http://www.share-international.org)

**OCT 30**

**Fill Your Workshops With Ease**: Avoid the 3 massive mistakes workshop leaders make. Presented by Callan Rush. 7-10PM. Tickets free when you pre-register. In Vancouver. Call Kate at 1-888-686-7409.

**NOV 3**

**Open House - Institute of Holistic Nutrition**: Course/Career opportunities, exhibits, lectures & more. 10AM-3:30PM, 604 West Broadway, Ste. 300. [www.instituteofholisticnutrition.com](http://www.instituteofholisticnutrition.com)

**NOV 3**

**The Four Elements of John O'Donohue**: music, poetry, talk & personal introspection with Denis Donnelly. 9:30AM-3:30PM, Canadian Memorial Centre for Peace, 806 W. 15th Ave. Tickets \$65 at Banyen, 604-732-7912.

**NOV 6-9**

**Free talks on "green spirituality"** in Vancouver by Chris Philpott, green activist and author of Green Spirituality. For more info, email [chris@greenspirituality.org](mailto:chris@greenspirituality.org)

**NOV 7**

**Chuck Spezzano Evening** - Be part of the shift in personal and global consciousness. Sandman Hotel, 180 West Georgia, Vancouver 7-10PM, [www.povcanada.com](http://www.povcanada.com)

**NOV 9**

**Jeff Rubin: Talk and book signing**: UBC Robson Square Theatre, 7PM. Tickets \$15 at Banyen/door. 30% off the book with ticket. Jeff Rubin is the author of The End of Growth. Banyen 604-732-7912. See Banyen display ad.

**NOV 9-11**

**The Vancouver Yoga Conference and Show**: Vancouver Convention Centre. Featuring presenters, 80 exhibitors, 100 workshops & live entertainment. [www.thevancouveriyogashow.com](http://www.thevancouveriyogashow.com)

**NOV 9-11**

**Introduction to Foot Reflexology** commences Certificate Weekend Training Course. Introduction 7:30PM, \$10; Course \$395. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818, [www.pacificreflexology.com](http://www.pacificreflexology.com)

**NOV 16**

**12th Annual World Kindness Concert**: Centre for Performing Arts, 777 Homer St. Early bird special until Oct. 16. Info/tickets [www.worldkindnessconcert.com](http://www.worldkindnessconcert.com)

**NOV 17**

**Evolutionary Enlightenment Seminar** with spiritual teacher Andrew Cohen. Centre For Peace, Vancouver, 10:30AM-5:30PM. Register online ([www.canadianmemorial.org](http://www.canadianmemorial.org)) or at Banyen Books.

**NOV 17**

**The Science of Personal and Global Transformation** with Bruce H. Lipton, PhD. VGH Vancouver. Tickets Banyen Books, 604-737-8858. Details [www.hypnosis.bc.ca](http://www.hypnosis.bc.ca)

**NOV 22-25**

**Drunvalo Melchizedek's Awakening** the Illuminated Heart 4-day workshop. Create a permanent Merkaba from your sacred space. \$444. Certified Teacher Laurie Cornell. 604-531-5156.

**DEC 9**

**Adam DreamHealer Heal Yourself** workshop Vancouver. Experience Self- Empowerment as Adam orchestrates 2 group healing sessions & teaches techniques to continue your healing. All registration [www.dreamhealer.com](http://www.dreamhealer.com)

**ONGOING**

**Experience the Power of Divine Healing Hands** with Dr. and Master Zhi Gang Sha, world renowned Soul Healer, Inspired teacher, Divine Channel and Master GK Khoe and Master Peter Hudoba. 604-336-4833. Dates & details for October at [www.LovePeaceHarmonyVancouver.com](http://www.LovePeaceHarmonyVancouver.com)

**ADNC Neurofeedback Centre**: Learn how Neuroplasticity improves your IQ! Discover how biofeedback & medical devices can treat & reduce Headaches, ADHD, Autism, Addictions, Pain, Stress, & Improve Performance! 604-730-9600, [www.neurofeedbackclinic.ca](http://www.neurofeedbackclinic.ca)

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**Brahma Kumaris Meditation Centre:** Relax in an atmosphere of peace while learning benefits of Raja Yoga meditation and wisdom of ancient spiritual knowledge. Offered free of charge. Please call 604-436-4795 for registration and information. [www.bkwsu.org/canada](http://www.bkwsu.org/canada)

**September-November: Want to be a healer?** Register to be a professional Backhealer. Experience a free session today. [www.thebackhealer.com](http://www.thebackhealer.com). 604-366-4743.

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**HU, A Love Song to God:** Experience, free, a Community HU. 1st Friday: 8PM, Harry Jerome Rec Centre, Seymour Rm, 123 E. 23rd St., North Vancouver and at 15996 84th, Surrey. 1st Tuesday: 7:30PM, 6550 Bonsor, Burnaby. [www.eckankar-bc.ca](http://www.eckankar-bc.ca)

**SUNDAYS**  
**Free Meditation Class Series – JYOTI (INNER LIGHT) MEDITATION, 10AM.** Meditation & Ecology Centre, 11011 Shell Road, Richmond. For curriculum and to register: Linda 604-985-5840.

**Centre for Spiritual Living:** Join us every Sunday @ 11 AM for practical spirituality with great music. Meditation: 10:15 AM. 1880 Triumph Street, Suite 8 (at Victoria Drive), Vancouver. Info: 604-321-1225, [www.cslvancouver.com](http://www.cslvancouver.com)

**TUESDAYS**  
**Reflexology Student Clinic** 6–10pm. One-hour sessions \$20. By appointment only. Pacific Institute of Reflexology (604) 875-8818. [www.pacificreflexology.com](http://www.pacificreflexology.com)

**THURSDAYS**  
**Questions and answers with Aurora,** a beluga whale and Master Guide. Live channelling every Thurs., 6-8PM at the new D'ash'a'mote studio. Call Michael 604-600-4912 for info or email [michael@seaofheartlight.com](mailto:michael@seaofheartlight.com), [www.seaofheartlight.com](http://www.seaofheartlight.com) By donation.

## HEALTH

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## MASSAGE CLASSES

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# VIFF: Discoveries in Nature-ville



From *Carbon for Water*: Thanks to carbon credits, 900,000 homes in the western province of Kenya had free water filters installed.

New York is not a place that springs to mind when you think about bird watching. All that concrete and human bustle. But smack in the middle of Manhattan you'll find one of the most famous urban parks in the world and as *Birders: the Central Park Effect* reveals, it's a magnet for hundreds of different species of native and migrating birds.

The documentary, showing at VIFF on October 8 and 10, pools the wisdom and musings of some of New York's keenest ornithologists, from a precocious high school student who rarely leaves home without her

binocs, to the frail matriarch who leads bird watching tours through the park. Over a period of a year, we follow the changing complexion of the park and the birdlife therein.

Ironically, the greying of the city means that existing greenspaces are even more densely populated with these feathered visitors. On a spring day, up to a hundred species can apparently be spotted in Central Park. The doc also raises the interesting question of how natural a totally man-made park, where a stream is turned off with a twist of a tap, can be. As one birder puts it, if a herd of buffalo were migrating through New York,

he'd go and see that. But they aren't. This is the last thing keeping people in touch with wilderness.

You've probably heard of the "Great Pacific Garbage Patch" in the Pacific gyre. You may also have read recent reports that the North Atlantic gyre is comparable in the scale of plastics pollution. *Into the Gyre* (October 9, 11) follows a crew of scientists as they heave-ho aboard a tall ship from Bermuda to gather the data that brought about this recent revelation. Watching these meticulous, driven scientists at work brings home the seriousness of a problem that we are only beginning to fathom. Piscivores might want to look away when they open up a fish to reveal a gut-full of plastic bits.

The 44-minute doc is paired with 22-minute *Carbon for Water*, an encouraging eco-doc that illustrates how putting a price on carbon can reap far-reaching humanitarian and environmental benefits. Thanks to carbon credits, 900,000 homes in the western province of Kenya had free water filters installed over a period of 25 days, reducing the need for women to gather firewood to boil their water. A win-win all round, it would seem.

Annie Eastman's documentary *Bay of All Saints* (October 8, 9) does a great job of capturing the struggle over a period of several years of Brazil's poorest, as they face relocation from their stilted ocean slums or "palafitas" in Bahia. In spite of the shocking piles of floating garbage, rats and rickety dwellings, this sympathetic portrait of three single palafita mothers reveals a spirited and proud community. The choice of the easy-going, refrigerator repairman Norato, a life-long resident of the palafitas, to tell the main story, was inspired.

Also at VIFF, *Sharkwater* director Rob Stewart returns with a call to save not just the sharks, but the world and humanity itself as he travels across 15 countries in *Revolution* (October 6, 7, 10) showing the dire condition of the planet's ecosystems. ❏

VIFF runs to October 12 ([www.viff.org](http://www.viff.org)). **Robert Alstead** writes for [2020Vancouver.com](http://2020Vancouver.com)

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Gregory Bateson &amp; the Rhizome Century Conference advertisement

## “Occupy” the boardroom and the kitchen conversation

Over the last year media outlets and authorities from every corner have been grappling to describe, interpret and react to new populist movements.

These uprisings, have taken many forms, around various causes and in different contexts around the globe. But one cannot help but be struck by the feeling that there is something “going on,” that there is something that ties them all together. It seems that there are more things that make the protests similar, than what makes them different. What is it in these situations that have led so many ordinary people to take to the streets in protest?

In our own back yards we have seen the Occupy Movement echo across the continent from the original Occupy Wall Street. Over 800 communities in North America saw tent cities and camps pop-up in their downtowns. Reporters puzzled that the protests had no discernible leadership, nor was there a central message or set of demands for reform.

A year later the Occupy Movement is described by Wikipedia as “different local groups [having] different foci, but among the prime concerns is the claim that large corporations and the global financial system control the world in a way that disproportionately benefits a minority, undermines democracy and is unstable.” But the world has certainly seen garden variety “anti-capitalist” demonstrations before. Seldom have any of them sparked a global wave of uprisings, whereas *Occupy* has reached across 82 different countries.

Perhaps what is different this time is that the Occupy Movement comes on the heels of a global financial crisis where consumer losses were estimated in trillions of US dollars and the housing market virtually collapsed, resulting in evictions, foreclosures and prolonged unemployment. Families had perviously been courted by banks who showered them with enticements for mortgages and loans. Then suddenly the families were treated as pariahs and shoved out onto the streets. The feeling of having been betrayed was inescapable. The social agreement, or relationship, that people thought that they had with these institutions, had been broken. Ordinary

working people were stripped of all they had worked for. People’s lives, homes, communities; everything they valued, were wiped out by the banks’ shifting financial models.

We live in a world where the models for ascribing value are dominated by finance. If something is valued, or given importance, the dominant system will quantify it in terms of money. Money is the measure of all things. Absurdly, we may speak of a million dollar view to describe a vista of breathtaking beauty. Or our provincial government may balk at putting a pipeline through ecologically sensitive wilderness unless they receive a generous share of the oil revenues.

Consider that money value is the wrong conversation in these, if not most, situations. Perhaps what the Occupy Movement is instinctively trying to convey is that we need a new type of conversation, in order to create new shared relationships. This new conversation will also deal with the value of things, based on directly shared values. From this a whole new lexicon of meaning can emerge.

No one really knows what this will look like. But the Occupy Movement did recognize that in order for the conversation to go forward it had to do so as a conversation, without a leader. Lynn Hoffman described this as being leaderful, as opposed to being leaderless

### Conference on inter-connectedness in human and global relations

The conference, Gregory Bateson and the Rhizome Century (Vancouver, October 23-25) brings together local and international delegates and presenters. This event will focus upon the thinking of Gregory Bateson and Lynn Hoffman. We will consider new and renewed ways of living and working with each other that honour the complex, interlinking relationships we are all part of. The presenters will describe how these kinds of ideas are currently being used successfully in a variety of human endeavours throughout the world, and how such ideas can assist in creating new paths into our future.

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